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Lin Yutang, Critic and Interpreter

CHAN WING-TSIT¹

So BRILLIANT, versatile, provocative, and at times apparently inconsistent a writer as Lin Yutang is not easy to understand. We will welcome with open arms an autobiography by Dr. Lin telling us the story of his intellectual and spiritual evolution (or, rather, revolution) with which alone an adequate understanding of him can be achieved. One thing can be sure, however, namely, that Lin's voice is that of a critic of the Chinese and American ways of life. He is often called a Chinese philosopher. Well, he is not a professional philosopher but a philosopher in the sense of being a critic of life and an interpreter of ancient wisdom.

Lin was born (1895) and brought up in a Christian minister's family in the days when to become a Christian was to become not only a non-Chinese in behavior, in thought, and even in speech, but an anti-Chinese. He was educated in a missionary institution in China where ignorance of Chinese philosophy was a virtue and love of Chinese art was almost a sin. Such heritage was bound to explode eventually in violent reaction. No wonder Lin has become a bitter if

unfair critic of Christianity and a passionate exponent of Chinese philosophy and art.

After his training at Harvard and Leipzig, Lin returned to China in 1923 to devote his talent to teaching and research in Chinese philology. In spite of his inadequate training in Chinese in his youth, he turned out to be a top-notch philologist in the short space of only a few years. But China in the twenties was in turmoil with civil wars, floods, and starvation. She was also in dynamic transformation through the intellectual renaissance, communism, and the National Revolution. Lin could not rest satisfied with the serene study of philology. Like many a Chinese intellectual, he became a vigorous critic of social and political conditions; he joined the universal chorus of protest.

His protest did not take the form of bloody revolution as in the case of Communists or of constructive reform as in the case of liberals but the form of satirical attack on war lords, chauvinistic Confucianists, and reactionary feudalists. His voice was bitter, as all voices of protest in China in the twenties were bitter. What made his criticism particularly attractive, however, was its humor.

¹ Dr. Chan is professor of Chinese culture at Dartmouth College.

He loved to poke fun at China's die-hards. He subjected big-time grafters and small-time pickpockets alike to merciless ridicule. In a Chinese periodical which he edited, he conducted a column called "Old Curiosity Shop" in which he published absurd pronouncements of militarists and reactionaries and made them appear so ridiculous that readers inevitably burst into laughter. It was not merely fun. His criticism was stinging as well as entertaining. Over his pages run tears and laughter.

This spicy humor provided a natural outlet for the pent-up emotions of young Chinese intellectuals and was the main reason for his tremendous popularity. What is more significant, he created, whether consciously or unconsciously, a new atmosphere in Chinese literature, an atmosphere characterized by human interest, pathos, wit, and humor. Wit and humor have always enjoyed an honorable, if secondary, place in Chinese literature, as Dr. George Kao's excellent anthology, *Chinese Wit and Humor*,¹ eloquently shows. But by the twentieth century Confucian formalism had relegated humor to the level of indignity. A gentleman, in the Confucian way of thinking, should not engage in fun-making, at least not on the printed page. As to war lords, Communists, and reformers, they were all high-strung, with lips tightly drawn. China was in need of a grin. It was not surprising, therefore, that when Lin made fun of Confucius or of the dog-meat-eating general, his readers enjoyed an ecstatic feeling of release. They conferred on him the title "Great Master of Humor." They imitated his style. They brought to Chinese writing, at least to the familiar essay, a feeling of relaxation and an atmosphere of fresh air. Perhaps it is an exaggeration to say that Lin has

created a new style in modern Chinese literature. Nevertheless, the element of humor is there to stay.

Lin, the critic, with his bitterness and biting humor, attracted not only China's young intellectuals but also Pearl Buck, who was then teaching in China. At her encouragement Lin wrote *My Country and My People*, which appeared in 1935.² With this publication, which immediately started a series of best sellers almost every other year, Lin became an interpreter of China to the West.

Few interpreters of China have been so liberally praised and severely condemned at the same time as has Lin. Pearl Buck called *My Country and My People* "the truest, the most profound, the most complete, the most important book yet written about China."³ Similar praise resounded from every direction, for his excellent English, certainly the very best any Chinese has ever written, which always holds a spell over his readers, and for his elucidation of Chinese wisdom, making it so true, so convincing, so much alive, so fascinating.

At the same time, many people, both in China and in the United States, were furious. Sensitive Chinese were furious at him for exposing China's vices, which he called "the Male Triad of the magistrate, the gentry, and the local rich" who exploited the masses and "the Female Triad of Face, Fate, and Fame."⁴ Chinese government officials were furious at him because he attacked them for "eating the people's fat and the people's marrow."⁵ He declared that the only savior of China was the Great Executioner who, with a sweep of his gleaming sword, would liquidate China's war lords, bandits, corruption, nepotism, and the ab-

¹ New York: Reynal & Hitchcock.

² *Ibid.*, p. xii.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 195.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 190.

sence of the social mind and would nail the banner of justice on China's city walls.⁶ Chinese Leftists were furious, too, because to them he was but a joker who tried to laugh off the cruel oppressions of the masses. No less furious were many Old China Hands because he derided their Shanghai mind, especially its arrogance and unwillingness to understand the Chinese. More recently, Anglophiles were irritated at him for making Churchill the villain of his *Between Tears and Laughter* (1943).⁷ American Communists and their fellow-travelers, who are always irked at somebody, naturally could not spare Lin, particularly when he dared to reveal the many ugly things Chinese Communists had done.⁸

Being purely political or personal, these criticisms are extraneous to the real merits or demerits of Lin as an interpreter of China. But there is one serious criticism, from both Chinese and American quarters, that deserves close attention, namely, that Lin is out of tempo with the Chinese people. When the Chinese were in the midst of a bloody revolution, these critics said, Lin contended that the Chinese people had always been willing to submit to tyranny. While Chinese reformers condemned conservatism as the primary cause for China's downfall, he said it was "a form of pride," "a sign of inward richness," "a gift rather to be envied." When Chinese women were rebelling against confinement to the home and were fighting for their place in the sun, Lin told Americans that Chinese women did not want independence.⁹ At the very moment the Chinese people were struggling

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 172, 178, and 362.

⁷ New York: John Day.

⁸ *The Vigil of a Nation* (New York: John Day, 1944).

⁹ *My Country . . . ,* pp. 46, 72, and 146.

desperately to fill their rice bowls, Lin told his readers that the Chinese had an instinctive contempt for wealth and questioned the value of raising the standard of living.¹⁰ Everyone knows that the average Chinese works from dawn to dusk, and yet Lin propounded as truly Chinese philosophy that "the wisely idle is the most cultured man."¹¹ To the modern Chinese, science is tantamount to Almighty God, but Lin said the dead hound of science was upon the West.¹² Chinese Fascists were trying to control Chinese life by reviving the Confucian system of social control through ceremony and music, and Lin offered to the world as the road to freedom the Confucian doctrine of government by music.¹³ And while the Chinese were dying by the millions, Lin had the heart to indulge in chitchat on the moon, rocks and gardens, dreams, smoke and incense, the art of growing old gracefully, and Confucius singing in the rain! No wonder many Chinese called his book "My Country and My Class" or, resorting to a pun, called it "Mai Country and Mai People"—*mai* being the Chinese word for selling or betraying. No wonder many Americans denounced him as superficial, irresponsible, clever, and witty but not much else.

This is not entirely fair. Much of the foregoing is really distortion of Lin's writing. When seen in their proper context, Lin's statements are not such contradictions to Chinese life and ideals. The fascist prostitution of Confucianism, for example, does not falsify the truth of the Confucian ideal of world peace through harmony and order,

¹⁰ *The Importance of Living* (New York: Reynal & Hitchcock), pp. 155; *The Vigil . . . ,* p. 90.

¹¹ *The Importance . . . ,* p. 150.

¹² *The Vigil . . . ,* p. 176.

¹³ *Between Tears and Laughter*, p. 72.

which is what government by music really means. True, Lin enjoys writing about Chinese poetry, tea-drinking, the art of lying down, sex appeal, bedbugs, pidgin English, and the calisthenic value of kowtowing. But he also wrote about China's sorrows, the wickedness of concubinage, the "monstrous and perverse" binding of women's feet, the nine-course dinners as a means of bribery, the greatness of the communistic writer Lusin, the challenge of the Communist revolution, the necessity of a bill of rights, and all expressions of China's storm and stress and of her spiritual awakening.¹⁴ The legitimate question is whether, in his comprehensive picture of Chinese life and the Chinese mind, Lin has given a true interpretation.

Whether Lin is a reliable interpreter of China in general, there can be no doubt that he is an excellent interpreter of Chinese art, at least for the uninitiated. A technical expert or historian will find him amateur. While most experts and historians deal chiefly with externals and somehow miss the inner spirit in which the Chinese people find their solace and inspiration, Lin not only makes Chinese art intelligible to his readers but also makes it meaningful to them. Lin's treatise on Chinese artistic life is the best introduction to the lyricism, the inner law or spirit, the artistic conception of Chinese art that I know of.¹⁵ His essay on calligraphy, too, is the best ever written on the subject. His discussion on Chinese literary life is most illuminating and fascinating, especially on Chinese poetry. Many scholars have translated and writ-

¹⁴ *My Country*, pp. 164-68; *The Vigil*, pp. 154 and 224; *Moment in Peking* (New York: John Day, 1939); *A Leaf in the Storm* (New York: John Day, 1941). See concluding chapters of *My Country*; *With Love and Irony* (New York: John Day, 1940); and *The Vigil*. . . .

¹⁵ *My Country*, chap. viii.

ten on China's greatest poets, Li Po (699-762) and Tu Fu (712-70). Lin alone enables his readers to feel the romantic abandonment of Li Po and the artistic restraint of Tu Fu. His *The Wisdom of China and India* (1942) is a magnificent anthology of Chinese literature, presenting Chinese wisdom as really modern and alive. Here the reader finds not only classical literature of Confucianism and Taoism but interesting sections on "Chinese poetry," "sketches of Chinese life," and "Chinese wit and wisdom," including eighth-century poetry, seventeenth-century proverbs, eighteenth-century letters, nineteenth-century tales, and twentieth-century epigrams. Nowhere else do we find such an enchanting and intriguing collection of Chinese essays. He handles the Chinese familiar essay, which comes in abundance in this and other volumes, in an unusually charming manner. Lin quotes them, translates them, and discusses them with a poet's feeling and a child's delight. In introducing to the West, Li Liweng's informal essays on willows, women's dresses, and the art of sleeping;¹⁶ Yuan Chunglang's delightful pieces on vase flowers; and Chang Ch'ao's enchanting essays on flowers and women, on rain, on leisure and friendship,¹⁷ Lin opened the eyes of the Western reader to an exceedingly interesting, though minor, form of Chinese literature.

Equally superb is his interpretation of Confucius. A philosopher or a historian will find his *The Wisdom of Confucius* (1938)¹⁸ uncritical. But for a systematic and eloquent introduction to Confucius as a human being and to Confucian teaching as a living factor in Chinese life,

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 324-28.

¹⁷ *The Importance*, pp. 310 ff.

¹⁸ New York: Modern Library.

I have yet to find a book so well balanced in its selection, so clear and smooth in its translation, and so convincing in its presentation of the humanistic spirit and reasonableness of Confucianism.

His treatment of the Taoism of Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu is even better. His translation of *The Book of Tao* in *The Wisdom of China and India*¹⁹ is superlative. It makes not only provocative philosophy but also fascinating literature. He gives it the force of his own conviction in Taoism that makes it inviting and challenging. To be sure, he has taken too much liberty in his rendering, thus making his version more interpretation than translation. Nevertheless, he surpasses all previous translators in revealing Lao Tzu's Way not as negativism or nihilism, as many Western writers would have it, but as a sensible, reasonable, strangely realistic, and profoundly wise way of life, as the Chinese people have always understood it to be, for Lin is virtually overwhelmed with Taoism.

It is not difficult to see why Taoism should have special attraction for Lin. Lao Tzu's voice was primarily a voice of protest—protest against war, against overtaxation, against hypocrisy, against the artificiality and rigidity of society, and against the superficiality and materialism of urban life. To these he opposed a life of simplicity, contentment, calmness, spontaneity, naturalness as in Mother Nature, weakness and meekness as in the female, and innocence as in the infant. The great Taoist follower Chuang Tzu went even further. To him the "pure man" should be a new-born calf. He held unreserved contempt for egoism, fame, and accomplishment. His ideal life was one of leisure, tranquillity, freedom, and vagabondage. Such philosophy is captivating, especially in the time of war,

oppression, chaos. Being a patriotic Chinese looking for a way out, Lin naturally finds the Taoist voice of protest pleasing; and, being a critic of the materialistic and restless American way of life, he naturally advocates the Taoist doctrine of leisure, repose, and inward peace.

This is not to say that Lin is a Taoist. With very few exceptions, the Chinese are a combined product of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. But, unlike most Chinese, Lin is more a Taoist than a Confucianist. This is true because of his strong emphasis on Taoism. As a matter of fact, in his writings Taoism is often overemphasized. He describes the Chinese people as characterized by sanity, simplicity, love of nature, patience, indifference, old roguery, fecundity, industry, frugality, love of family life, pacifism, contentment, humor, conservatism, and sensuality.²⁰ Elsewhere he says the Chinese possess "a playful curiosity, a capacity for dreams, a sense of humor to correct those dreams, and finally a certain waywardness and incalculability of behavior,"²¹ or, to put it differently, "great realism, inadequate idealism, a high sense of humor, and a high poetic sensitivity to life and nature."²² These would be excellent descriptions if applied to a Chinese who is 60 or 80 per cent Taoist. Indeed, Lin believes that the Chinese "are by nature greater Taoists than they are by culture Confucianists,"²³ a position hardly tenable. According to him, "all good Chinese literature is essentially imbued with the Taoist spirit."²⁴ Evidently, this undue emphasis on Taoism led him to begin the

¹⁹ *My Country*, p. 43.

²⁰ *The Importance*, p. 66.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

²² *My Country*, p. 56.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 556.

Chinese section of *The Wisdom of China and India* with Taoist selections. Likewise, in the section on "who can best enjoy life" in his *The Importance of Living* the leading example is a Taoist rather than a Confucianist. He would have us believe that Whitman and Thoreau were close to the Chinese.²⁵ Throughout his works an undue amount of space is devoted to Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu. These Taoists did contribute to the mellowness of Chinese character and to the liberality of the Chinese mind; and, in these respects, they have deeply inspired the Chinese literati. But the mysticism and primitivism of the Taoists have never been consonant with the typical Chinese temperament, which is practical, socioethical, and this-worldly. Lin himself admitted that "the Chinese temper is, on the whole, humanistic, non-religious and non-mystical." He said, however, that this was "true only to a certain extent" and insisted that the Chinese are mystical in the sense of a "new synthesis of the mechanical and the spiritual, of matter and spirit."²⁶ The truth is that Chinese philosophy arrives at such synthesis without resorting to mysticism, as the rationalism and empiricism of Neo-Confucianism so eloquently prove.

Once we understand Lin's strong partiality for Taoism, we can understand why he said that "the Chinese, as a people, avoided the dangers of civic deterioration by a natural distrust of civilization and by keeping close to primitive habits of life";²⁷ that Chinese civilization is a civilization "in love with primitivism";²⁸ that the Chinese glorify the idiot and the fool;²⁹ that they entertain a

²⁵ *The Importance*, p. 569.

²⁶ *The Wisdom of China and India*, pp. 567-68.

²⁷ *My Country*, p. 39.

²⁸ *Ibid.* ²⁹ *The Importance*, p. 110.

certain amount of vanity of this earthly existence;³⁰ that Chinese culture is a culture of leisure and that the Chinese are at their best at leisure;³¹ that the finest product of Chinese culture is a romantic cult of the idle life;³² that the Chinese art of living is the art of the "happy go-lucky carefree scamp, tramp, and vagabond which is the highest cultural ideal of a human being according to the Chinese conception";³³ that the Chinese entertain a farcical view of life;³⁴ that the Chinese mind is akin to the feminine mind in many respects, notably in its common sense, shyness of abstract terms, fondness for synthesis and concreteness, etc.³⁵

All this is true enough if taken only to a certain extent. These statements explain the Taoist in every Chinese. In Chinese poetry, art, and literature the Taoist spirit of play, of calmness, of leisure, of freedom, of waywardness, of melancholy, of peace, and of naturalism is too manifest to deny. But the typical Chinese is not a Taoist, and Chinese culture involves more than literature and art. Fortunately, Lin has not neglected to state that the highest conception of human dignity, according to the Chinese, "is when man reaches ultimately his greatest height, an equal of heaven and earth."³⁶ This is the Confucian doctrine of Central Harmony, which Lin so admirably interpreted.³⁷ He acknowledges that "Taoism is the Great Negation, as Confucianism is the Great Affirmation. Confucianism, through its doctrine of

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

³¹ *My Country*, pp. 135 and 322; *The Importance*, chaps. x and xi.

³² *The Importance*, p. 152.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

³⁴ *My Country*, p. 70.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 80; *The Importance*, p. 108.

³⁶ *The Importance*, p. 143.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 111-15 and 143; *The Wisdom of Confucius*, chap. iii.

propriety and social status, stands for human culture and restraint, while Taoism, with its emphasis on going back to nature, disbelieves in human restraint and culture."³⁸ Each compliments the other. "Hence all Chinese are Confucianists when successful, and Taoists when they are failures. The Confucianist in us builds and strives, while the Taoist in us watches and smiles."³⁹ There is an opposite influence in Chinese thought in general which counteracts the carefree philosophy of Taoism. "We are all born half Taoists and half Confucianists."⁴⁰ When the happy combination of Confucianism and Taoism is achieved, the result is sweet reasonableness. In interpreting this "highest type of life" of the Chinese, I believe Lin is at his very

³⁸ *My Country . . . ,* p. 116.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

⁴⁰ *The Importance . . . ,* p. 112.

best. Reasonableness denotes a double approach to reason and human nature, and reasonable thinking is humanized thinking.⁴¹ Out of this reasonableness have come the typical Chinese traits of moderation, tolerance, realism, old courtesy, intense interest in life, humanism, humor, mellowness, sanity, conservatism, and love of family life.

In short, when Lin overemphasized Taoism, he did so as a critic of deplorable conditions as he found them in China and in the West. When he stressed the synthesis of Confucianism and Taoism, he was interpreting the abiding aspects of Chinese life. Thus, Lin is not a perfect interpreter of China. Who is? If we take care to avoid his overemphasis of Taoism, we will find him a very good interpreter of China in many respects.

⁴¹ *My Country . . . ,* pp. 90 and 100; *The Importance . . . ,* p. 423.

The Quest for Currents in Contemporary English Literature. I¹

H. V. ROUTH²

IT is difficult to write on current literature because, strictly speaking, literature has no currents. It does not resemble a stream, except from the distance. When near at hand, it is more like an eddy and a backwash. Such has always been its nature, and at the present time the recurrent disturbances have developed into a whirlpool which is neither deep nor

strong and which at any moment may change its aspect. This apparent aimlessness is so disconcerting that one learns more from the influences which have sunk below the surface than from those which have risen into ripples at the top. Appearances are less significant than disappearances.

In order to disentangle and arrange our impressions, it must be remembered that literature is literature because it speaks with two voices. First, there is the language of art addressed to the aesthetic perceptions, the imagination, and one's sense of other people. This quality holds the reader's attention and prepares

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him for what is coming. That which comes is the second voice, hardly audible to the reason but whispering that the author understands your spiritual necessities, perhaps better than you do yourself, and is showing you how to satisfy them. His experiences, inventions, and discourses are means to that end—artificial imitations of value in so far as they suggest your own unspoken self. In this sense, and to that extent, his second voice becomes yours also.

With these expectations the twentieth century turned to its literary heritage and continues to do so. There has been no perverse rupture with tradition, no irreverent iconoclasm—at least not worth considering. Even Victorian authors are still zealously studied and enjoyed. But the enjoyment is no longer the same as it used to be. It is not wholehearted. It now arises from the desire and respect for culture. Consequently, the twentieth century reads with one eye on something else which is lacking: their own ill-defined and unsatisfied ideas of themselves. They cannot catch the intimate tones of the second voice.

Those who make it their business to follow the moods of the reading public, that is to say, the men and women who write for it, were not slow to realize that post-Victorians were looking in Victorian books for what they could not find, and, ever since, the writers have been racking their brains to supply this. As far as possible they keep to the approved forms and formulas, which have stood the test of time; not seldom they revive the methods and manners of a distant age; but they are seeking high and low to introduce a more satisfying intimacy, a more penetrating consciousness, so that the reader may feel completely at home and at ease in their themes.

And what is this something lacking?

It has been suggested by Count Keyserling in *Creative Understanding* (*Schöpferische Erkenntniss* [1922]) by the one word “adjustment” (*Einstellung*). Nor would anyone deny that, if human nature is to be as it always was, its most permanent quality is adaptation to an elusive environment. So, if man is to remain the same, he must be constantly changing, and literature must externalize this permanence in change.

There we have the essential problem of contemporary literature. The individual is uncertain about his own self-consciousness, which has been disturbed by the findings of anthropology and of psychoanalysis; uncertain about his duty to his neighbor and to himself, that is to say, his place in society; uncertain about the rhythms and routines of our neo-mechanical civilization, which seem to pervade our habits and yet to thwart our inclinations; uncertain about the international future, which threatens not only his means of living but his chances of life; uncertain about his relations to the physical universe, which become more puzzling with each stellar and atomic revelation. Lastly, he is more than uncertain about his ability to assimilate these conflicting influences, at least so much of them as concern his own identity, and to convince himself that he is a selfhood and not merely a function. He must become conscious of knowledge in order to become more conscious of himself. As recently as 1945, C. Connolly, the thoughtful and constructive editor of *Horizon*, lamented in *Unquiet Grave* that his sensibilities are daily dissipated among a stream of impressions and by nightfall he has not yet found his focus. Assuredly, the modern man has to tread very warily among the huge cloudy symbols which he can no longer ignore. If he is to achieve his integration, he must ac-

quire a new accuracy of thought and precision of passion and, consequently, more penetrating ways of expressing what he feels and thinks. Otherwise, the *soit du total* will not be satisfied.

At least that is what twentieth-century authors have been trying to do, whether consciously or not. Each fastens upon the particular aspect and interest which seems most likely to promise adjustment. Each tries to touch the reader in the place where he will most readily respond, knowing that the truth depends on the way it is presented. It is by watching this game of "hit and miss" that the student can form some idea of present-day tendencies.

Our first criterion should be the novel, which is the most popular type and therefore the least prone to eccentricity. E. M. Forster began by studying middle-class pre-war society, presenting its humors and frustrations and also dwelling on the need for a deeper and more understanding fellowship between kindred spirits. He also hinted at the unaccountable impulses which cry out for fulfilment, despite our cultured self-discipline, that is to say, the problem of the "unsatisfied heart." Yet, despite his genius, he ended by perplexing even his experienced critics, Virginia Woolf among them, because he was too detached and objective. He did not present the moral and emotional crises which are typical and could therefore be divined and appreciated, and yet he left the divination to the reader. It is noteworthy that his two most spirited narratives waft us away from this overcrowded, conventional island, the one to Italy, the other to India, as if he and his characters could fulfil themselves more freely amid the romance of foreign lands and the tension of international susceptibilities.

Somerset Maugham went further. In his quasi-autobiographical *Of Human Bondage* he made clear that English society no longer gives scope to the creative writer. It is too money-ridden and class-conscious, too ignobly competitive and departmentalized, too secretly immoral, for the growth of the human spirit. So, in his happiest moments he lets his characters loose "somewhere East of Suez" or in cosmopolitan bohemia, anywhere beyond the reach of conventionality, so long as they can be their own ignoble selves, for, after all, what is this human spirit worth? Very little—at the most an unconquerable passion for self-assertion, for accomplishing one's own wayward personality, even at the cost of vice and crime. We have one salvation; that is the contemplation and refashioning of the otherwise mournful spectacle so as to perfect our sense of proportion, of disciplined thought, and of the fitness which is a kind of beauty. The personages should express their own wanton selves in such a way that the author expresses his artistic personality. Experience should be worked into a pattern. It is a good sign that some of his best or nearly best works are among his latest, for instance, *A Christmas Holiday* (1940) and *The Razor's Edge* (1944). Yet it is doubtful whether this veteran, who mellows with age, is carrying the younger generation with him. Though he is as lucid as Voltaire and De Maupassant (on whom he modeled his style), he is even more objective—in fact, aloof—and his younger contemporaries want to feel that the narrator who is talking to them is, in some sort, one of the *dramatis personae*. Moreover, though they do not want novels of society, they do not want characters who escape society. It is too much like taking a holiday when one ought to work.

Both these writers relied on the reader to carry within his head the inward as well as the outward development of their novels, *coincider avec l'esprit créateur du romancier*; that is, to keep pace with his workmanship, every artistic touch to be noted, remembered, and fitted into the design which should grow more definite page by page. They offered something more than entertainment. The novel-reader had to study the organization of the work, keeping his attention duly concentrated on the technique. This was hard work but brought with it the more intellectual pleasure of clear and comprehensive thinking, an exercise which the new age badly needed. But neither artist satisfied that other expectation that this literary experience should be worth the pains. Did it also lead to a fuller and more elevating experience in human nature—or the reverse? One was tempted at first to hope that Henry James, George Moore (in his latest phase), Conrad, and De la Mare (*The Return, The Memoirs of a Midget*) would make good where Forster and Maugham defaulted. But their subtle and masterly workmanship, so far from stopping short of "that other expectation," went too far beyond it. They inspired curiosity ending in wonder, not in understanding. Their characters, in general, were too remote or romantic. The age did not want experiments in social or antisocial psychology. It could not imagine itself reflected in the personage of "Lord Jim," Jesus (*The Brook Kerith*), Arthur Lawford (*The Return*), or the leisurely upper-class Victorian figures, already extinct, whom James revived and endowed with his creative genius; while, at the other extreme, Kipling's dashing, colloquial yarns presented either the men who got through the day's work for the nation on the outskirts of the British Empire or those who

had done so within the island in the distant past before the English became British. Moreover, imperialism, whether present or potential, had lost its spell ever since the Boer War.

There remained the straightforward realists who, like G. Gissing and G. Moore (in his earlier phase), were content to record the life and character around them, provided that they were free to sort out the facts and to impose their personality on the assortment. Thus organized, any set of impressions and observations could become literature. Arnold Bennett is the modern representative. He produced five or six notable novels (most of them concerned with the "Five Towns"), but, being a wholehearted realist, oversensitive to the surface of life, he was caught up in the whirl and flashiness of interwar cosmopolitanism and produced story after story which can be described only as novelistic photography. The same temptation assailed H. G. Wells, with the same result. Galsworthy fared no better. He wrote one great novel (*The Man of Property*), but, when he produced the sequels, the *Forsyte Saga* made his fame and fortune because, for the moment, the multitudinous book-reading public was less interested in the birth of a new England than in the death of the scatter-brained old one; and that interest could not last.

All these novelists were conscientious craftsmen, perhaps artists. All had something needful to say or to show. All had won recognition before the first World War and perhaps for that reason now exercise so little influence, though they are still read with pleasure. So they are predecessors, not contemporaries. They have not lighted on the place where the future lies in germ. That may be the fault of the future.

The same is true of the verse-writers, though they were even more resourceful and adventurous. Before the end of the last century cultured people knew that there was something wrong with English poetry; it was beginning to repeat itself; and as Aristotle and many since have said "two into one won't go" (*δις δὲ δύκε ἐνδέχεται*). In fact, at the very height of Victorianism, Browning had ventured at times to burst out into the most unexpected colloquialisms, to explore the most questionable situations without reverence or even reticence, and to compose with such vigorous carelessness that Carlyle advised him to write in prose; and his example may count for more than is supposed at the present day. Kipling and Masefield each certainly claimed more than his portion of freespokenness, each in his own way. But the would-be reformers and renovators who believe in forming "schools" were prepared to be more doctrinaire, if not more drastic. A number associated with Montagu or Bridges believed that our verse had lost vigor because our modern diction is worn thin by overuse, like a coin which has changed hands so often that the surface is rubbed flat. So they advocated the revival of pre-Renaissance English which should re-enter our speech with all its old native vigor, rendered fresh by centuries of disuse. Needless to add, the result was merely a touch of quaintness or pedantry. The illiterate spoken word, however modern, might be just as startling and vivid when it appears unexpectedly in print. Unhappily, it soon appeared so often that it ceased to be unexpected; obviously, it was not enough to write as one talks, despite all of A. E. Housman's skill. Nor again was it enough, like the Georgian (should be "neo-Georgian") poets, to practice the established verse forms—generally bal-

lad or reflective meters varied by Shakespearean and Greek drama—keeping free from imperialism and sentiment, relying on an impeccable execution and the cult of literary and homely pleasures, though Rupert Brooke is charming with his cultured naturalism and J. E. Flecker is a model of "Parnassian" clarity and compactness.

The first important and effective reform was inaugurated between 1908 and 1912 by T. E. Hulme, in conversation. Nothing of his was published until 1924, when he was dead. He believed that man was by nature too limited to rise above his actual experiences, much less to court contact with infinity. If, however, he could condense his earth-bound emotions and sensibilities into the shortest and most direct expressions, such as appealed to the eye of the mind, he would have more than enough to inspire himself and share with kindred spirits. So he prophesied that "a period of dry, hard, classical verse is coming"; he defined art as "a passionate desire for accuracy" and the aesthetic emotion as "the excitement which is generated by direct communion." All these qualities were to be perfected in imagism, that is to say, a succession of word cameos, so precise and expressive that they flashed the poet's meaning straight into the reader's imagination. An image is evoked rather in the manner of an impressionist, and two spirits unite in its implications. Such pictures, of course, were invented or, rather, struck off to illustrate the poet's state of mind; and the principle should have revived the long lost practice of simile and metaphor which give so much vigor and picturesque variety to the *Iliad*, *Aeneid*, and *Paradise Lost* (in Books I and II). So, indeed, it did; and twentieth-century verse has been more incisive and vivid ever since. But im-

agism as a cult was beginning to feel rather ashamed of itself after World War I, first, because English writers have no natural gift for forming "schools" and *cénacles*—they are too mutually critical—and, second, because a series of objective pictures does not give free play to the personality. The final *Imagist Anthology* (1930) had almost forgotten imagism. Its influence, however, is unmistakable in D. H. Lawrence, Ezra Pound, Yeats, and Eliot.

Imagism sanctioned and encouraged reform or, rather, revival in prosody, which ought to have been of the greatest importance. It made its appeal through the imaginative eye, not through the sense of form and meter, and consequently chafed at the restrictions of stereotyped versification which had ceased to be spontaneous. On the other hand, the older and the ancient poets had shown them how to write a sequence of verses which was impulsive and elastic. Some of Homer's hexameters are made up of very doubtful "quantities." Greek choruses seem to the nonspecialists to depend on rhythm rather than on metrical feet. Such is certainly the license claimed by the authors of *Beowulf* and *The Vision concerning Piers Plowman*. The Elizabethan dramatists took the most glorious liberties with their prosody, producing subtle and startling effects, and Milton's heroic iambics are grand because they are not merely iambics but a flow of broken rhythms and sudden strokes of emphasis, charged with the inspiration of the moment. It was also not forgotten that the "metaphysical" elegies of the seventeenth century and the great meditative odes of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, though conceived on a highly wrought system, yet gave the impression of irregular or at least spontaneous har-

mony, with their interrhymes and with their alignment varying with the rise and fall of emotion. In the later nineteenth century some efforts had been made to recapture this freedom (for instance, by Matthew Arnold and W. E. Henley), and now in the twentieth the time seemed ripe for a concerted revival. Both Bridges and Eliot dwelt on its value. Prosody should follow the poet, not lead him.

Such are the origin and justification of free verse, which began to be professed as a mode of composition in or after 1908, was dismissed by the more experienced practitioners and reformers, and came into its own during and after World War I. It certainly encourages the idea to rise of its own accord and follow its own bent, like the branches of a tree. The poet does not have to search for words which will fit into a metric system. He is thrown back on his impulses. So the "new poetry" ought to have satisfied the twentieth-century need for closer and more intimate means of intercommunication. It certainly has inspired an atmosphere of experiment, of responsiveness to outward impressions, and of openheartedness among friends. Poetry continues to be freer and more fluent than it used to be, and most poets now and then drop into the manner. Yet free verse has ceased to hold the field for a most unexpected reason. One of the notable features of our age is the prevalence of the poetic habit, that is to say, the disposition to express one's self in verse. In Victorian times amateur poetry was kept a secret or was condoned as a youthful indiscretion—the art was left to the professionals. Nowadays the output is enormous; and it is said that much of it is more good than bad. However, much of it is overhasty, and many a young aspirant who is, perhaps, prepared to pub-

lish at his own expense and to call himself a poet is tempted by the fallacious facility of free verse and avails himself of its apparent license, unaware of its responsibilities. So the art has become too often an object lesson of what not to do.

English writers, who generally dislike learning from each other (unless under the influence of the book market), are usually ready to learn from foreigners; and everyone knows that free verse was authorized and encouraged by the example of certain French poets. *Vers libres*, however, was most often the language of *symbolisme*, which followed in its train. We must now consider this foreign esoteric cult, because it has exercised an important influence on the past two or three decades of our own literature.

The Symbolist is one who has given up hope of worldly adjustment. He no longer tries to assimilate and organize the ideas around him; he is anti-intellectual and eschews anything one can learn from another; he lives for the inward sensation, the moment, the palpitation *intérieure*. Thus introverted, his creative energy is concentrated on the vague longings and aspirations which seem to possess and permeate not his brain but his whole sensuous being. This energy becomes so penetrating and spontaneous that he can unify all his consciousness of self and crowd it into a single pregnant moment (*simultanéisme*), as if he were already a part of eternity. "La mission de la poésie," says Marcel Raymond in *De Baudelaire au surréalisme*, "est ... de permettre au *moi* d'échapper à ses limites et de se dilater jusqu'à l'infini." Such spiritual experiences (whether genuine or fanciful) cannot be communicated; they are superrational—above the powers of thought and speech. The Symbolist can convey only the impression of his emo-

tional state, his awareness of novelty, shock, revelation, surprise, integration (*unicité*), ecstasy in the original meaning of the word (*ex-stare*); and even then he must use a string of sentences which have no precise meaning but which in some sort symbolize or at least suggest his mystic excitement and beguile the reader into a similar, though exclusively individual, effort toward self-discovery.

Such is the principle; and, as regards the performance, one cannot help admiring their *technique de sensualisme*, which aims at breaking down the distinction between subject and object. Besides, it is the poet's right to explore his own essential being, to disembarass his spirit of all material attachments, to ask what it is in itself and whither it would feign go. These researches have often been attempted before, though few since Plotinus have ventured to search their hearts in such supernatural—or unnatural—isolation; and even then they have not despised the guidance of their reason. So it is not surprising that this transcendental attitude (sometimes associated with dynamism) has played its part in contemporary culture. It has encouraged the cult of the metaphysical poets and the study of Bergson, likewise the revival or, rather, discovery of Kierkegaard and of G. M. Hopkins. Hopkins did not avow symbolist sympathies, but he felt as deeply as any that the soul must transcend the limitations of the reasoning mind and in its unaccustomed nakedness find its way face to face with the Divine Intelligence. So at times he attained to what Father Lahey called "the bleak heights of spiritual night with God." His emotionalism, which he qualified as "poised but on the quiver," is sometimes struck down by a "horror of height" or sinks into "a swoon of the heart." If that touch of symbolist mysti-

cism in the air had not prepared people for things not dreamed of in their philosophy, Hopkins' genius might have been mistaken for the freakishness and obscurity in which he sometimes wraps up what he is trying to say.

Virginia Woolf also caught something of the symbolist questing spirit. Generally she is classified as a novelist of the internal monologue. She is indeed a novelist in that she presented her researches in the guise of a narrative, and at the same time she appreciated the significance of our unguarded and unbidden thoughts. But she is a Symbolist because she felt that a human being was real, was a personality, only so far as caught in a moment of time—the past blending with the present and pointing toward the future. Marcel Proust, the recognized prose Symbolist, devoted his life to that theme. Similarly, Mrs. Woolf created her characters out of the reminiscences, impressions, and anticipations which made up this or that person's place in the moving duration of events, always to be symbolized by the tides and times of the sea, fluctuating like the human emotions. Such a conception of life suggests the poet rather than the novelist. So does her rhythmic, sensitive prose style, free verse without the alignment but with much of the sensuousness and subtlety that poetry claims as its own.

Symbolism has been cultivated by many others, notably by Herbert Read, the resourceful humanist, critic, and surrealist poet who has done so much to demonstrate the value of art in education. In fact, Symbolists must be studied by any who study English literature. They remind even the most realistic poet that, if he is to master life, he must not forget to look into his own soul. They also remind us all that obscurity is sometimes inevitable, simply because

life is obscure. "The Lord said that he would dwell in the Thick Darkness," as King Solomon proclaimed. Yet symbolism has not taken possession of English art and aspiration. It is cultivated selectively, with reservations. Its inherent weakness has been twice exposed. In its earlier phase Max Nordau (*Entartung* [1892-93]) pointed out that it might and sometimes did degenerate into a neurotic solipsism, such as mental specialists treat in an asylum, and was, indeed, the symptom of an unbalanced age. In its latest phase Julien Benda (*La France Byzantine* [1946]) admits that these dreamers have accomplished a certain harmonization between the mysteries, aspirations, and lassitudes of existence but contends that it is only a half-adjustment, because they are anti-intellectual. They resign our human right to reason, analyze, and direct our footsteps by the light of self-taught wisdom. Their influence is due to the French literary tradition of *préciosité*. This obscurantism does not suit the English positivist temperament. The human being who seeks to know himself will not succeed unless the world is his looking glass, at least not in England. So our reformers learned what they could from the foreign solipsists and then applied the lesson to their environment. We have space only for the two most conspicuous experimenters.

W. B. Yeats was at heart a mystic. He believed in magic, hermetic philosophy, and the secret primitive influences of nature. He felt that all human beings were at heart the same, sharing alike in the common soul of the universe, responsive to the same spells and incantations, which we call music, legendry, and the enchantments of human speech. He cherished the conviction that he was always on the verge of a discovery within himself. Yet from the first he tried to

realize this mysticism in the not-himself, first, in his epics and dramas drawn from Irish folklore, reviving the race-consciousness of the primitive world, portrayed in allegorical figures; then, after a plunge into public life and the management of the Abbey Theatre and this earthly life of telegrams and anger, he learned that he could give free play to his own soul only by fusing his inward with his outward self, his earthly passions with his unearthly visions. This inward conflict, which he called the tension between the mask and the anti-mask, rendered his creative powers more vigorous; and he turned from mythology to realism, producing in drama *The Player Queen* (1922) and incisive verse with the hard glint of steel as in *The Tower* (1928) and *The Winding Stair* (1929). As he said in one of his latest letters to Lady Dorothy Wellesley: "Ours is the main road, the road of naturalness and swiftness—think like a wise man and express ourselves like the common people." Such was the career of the poet whom C. M. Bowra presents as the representative Symbolist of the English language (*The Heritage of Symbolism*).

T. S. Eliot is even more significant. He began with vivid and contemptuous satires in which he blended imagism, the spontaneity though not formlessness of free verse, together with a mindfulness of classic and classical traditions, as if he could assert his own integration by observing these arts and exposing the froth and futility of his age. Even at this period (1917-30) there are sentiments which he cannot express directly but can only imply with symbolistic indirectness. Gradually he seemed to discover that the poet of our day should not wax resentful at what is bad but in all humility should make clear to himself why he yearns for something better. So, in his second phase

he is entering on a voyage of exploration within his own soul, as the Symbolists would, and often is lapsing into their obscurity and figurative allusiveness, like them seeking to crowd his whole self-consciousness—the *tota simul*—into the instantaneous moment which is our human escape into eternity. But he does not surrender his right to analyze and observe; he is not anti-intellectual; nor is he wishful to lose contact with the influences outside him, for instance, an old-world garden, an ancient village, the sanctities of human intercourse, music, and the natural sights and sounds which inspire meditation. The culmination of this phase is his "Four Quartets" (*Burnt Norton*, *East Coker*, *The Dry Salvages*, *Little Giddings*).

It might be hoped that Yeats, Eliot, and some other kindred spirits had gone far toward solving the twentieth-century problem; had, in fact, collected the conflicting intimations and intuitions of our environment; and had given shape to the chaos, under the conditions of poetic beauty and truth. Yet we find them apologizing for their "difficulty." For instance, Ezra Pound explains: "Obscurities, inherent in the thing occur when the author is piercing, or trying to pierce into, uncharted regions; when he is trying to express things not yet current, not yet worn into phrase" (*Make It New*). Eliot himself admits, "It appears likely that poets in our civilization, as it exists at present, must be *difficult*. Our civilization comprehends great variety and complexity, and this variety and complexity, playing upon a refined sensibility, must produce various and complex results" (*Metaphysical Poets*). So much the worse for the poets. Obscurity signifies that they are composing for each other, that they are a cult, not a cultural influence, that they are not quotable,

that is to say, not yet admitted to the common speech and sentiment of the nation. So, for the present they are not a "current," but they are already an undercurrent.

We cannot record even this much progress among the novelists who followed Forster, Maugham, Conrad, Wells, Bennett, and Galsworthy. The most disappointing is D. H. Lawrence, who had a poet's genius for atmosphere and the mysterious intimations of nature and a novelist's genius for divining what his associates hide even from themselves. Moreover, like his immediate predecessors, he was a cosmopolitan whose creativeness worked freely in strange and spacious lands, far from English provincialism. Throughout his short hectic life he toiled feverishly at his own integration—the crying need of the time—and he professed to have made good. He insisted that the human spirit possessed by the pure idea of sex, uncontaminated by prudery, shame, or even reticence, accepting the facts of life as an inspiration, not as a repression, would regain its freedom and spaciousness, as in the Golden Age. So he wasted his genius on what might conceivably have meant salvation for him but for most normal people spells pornography. Is Aldous Huxley likely to be less mortal, though more respected? He has exposed the follies, egoisms, and vices around us, especially our hypocrisies and affectations, with more wit and erudition than Norman Douglas (*South Wind* [1917], *They Went* [1921]), with whom he used to be compared—and with more bitterness. Behind his cultured cynicism there lurks the hope of a new spiritual synthesis, centered in the oriental idea of eternity, and he has recently returned to this hope in

Time Must Have a Stop (1946). But in the meantime his irritability seems unable to stand the shocks and shudders of our age, and his very considerable talent has become as perverse as the perversity he dissects with such skill and relish.

There remains James Joyce, not the inventor, but the "grand champ" of the internal monologue. Others had employed the device as an additional side light on the humors of character, not forgetting Laurence Sterne; but this second Irishman, an expert in phonetics and philology, created out of it a new approach to the human psyche. He believed that our essential and characteristic qualities find their natural and satisfying expression in the mechanism and mediacy of speech, that is to say, not in the diction of the intellect but in the syllables, vocables, and phrases—"explosions," incessantly pullulating in our brains, evoking each other by obscure and instinctive associations, uncontrolled by the conscious will. When *Ulysses* appeared in 1922, some enthusiasts prophesied that this internal monologue, the overflow of our verbal germinations, would become a new resource for the experts in human nature. It caught the individual off his guard, not talking to the reader but to himself; it turned him inside out; it revealed the reverse of the medal. But as soon as one of these inquisitors tried his hand at the art, he was constrained to explore not so much the unmentioned thoughts, as those which are unmentionable; and we are no nearer the *whole man* and much further from the laws of decency.³

³ [In Part II, which will appear in the February *College English*, Mr. Routh discusses influences after World War I.—EDITOR.]

A Decade of Radio Drama

GLENN J. CHRISTENSEN¹

A STEADILY growing shelf of radio plays,² most of them published since 1940, now preserves permanently the best of the vigorous, experimental drama written for the air in the past decade. Most of the radio scripts thus far printed are the works of four writers: Norman Corwin, Arch Oboler, Archibald MacLeish, and Stephen Vincent Benét, although, with the publication of *Radio Dramas in Action*, a new group of writers, including Norman Rosten, Alan Lomax, and Millard Lampell, has been introduced to the reading public.

Radio drama may be said to have begun its existence as an independent literary and art form with the first "Columbia Workshop" program in July, 1936. In the ten years since that program, radio drama has grown because of

the faith and courage of a comparatively small group of writers and actors, assisted by an even smaller number of network officials. It has grown in spite of the conservatism of sponsors, advertising agencies, and vice-presidents who worship at the altar of Crossley and Hooper ratings and whose highest ambition is to imitate the currently most popular program.

Inevitably the work of these ten years has produced a theory of radio drama which begins with Archibald MacLeish's stage-of-words theory and which ends, for the moment, with Arch Oboler's "Requiem for Radio." The theory is, also inevitably, incomplete and lagging behind performance, but it contributes to an understanding of the personalities and currents in radio playwrighting.

MacLeish, pre-eminently a poet, saw radio as a medium for the poet and formulated the poet's theory of radio in the Foreword to *The Fall of the City*, which had its first performance on April 11, 1937.

The first fact which everyone knows is that radio is a mechanism which carries to an audience sounds and nothing but sounds. A radio play consists of words and word equivalents and nothing else. . . . Nothing exists save as the word creates it. The word dresses the stage. The word brings on the actors. The word supplies their look, their clothes, their gestures. The more packed and allusive the word, the more illuminating its rhythms, the more perfectly is the scene prepared, the more convincingly is the play enacted.³

¹ Modern English Readings, ed. Roger Sherman Loomis and Donald Lemen Clark (3d ed.; Farrar & Rinehart, 1939), p. 538.

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³ The shelf includes the following collections: Stephen Vincent Benét, *We Stand United: And Other Radio Scripts* (Farrar & Rinehart, ca. 1945); Norman Corwin, *Thirteen by Corwin* (Henry Holt, ca. 1942), *More by Corwin* (Henry Holt, ca. 1944), *On a Note of Triumph* (Simon & Schuster, 1945); Norman Corwin et al., *This Is War* (Dodd, Mead & Co., ca. 1942); *Free World Theatre*, ed. Arch Oboler and Stephen Longstreet (Random House, ca. 1944); Archibald MacLeish, *The Fall of the City* (Farrar & Rinehart, 1937), *Air Raid* (Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1938), *The American Story* (Duell, Sloan & Pearce, ca. 1944); Arch Oboler, *Fourteen Radio Plays* (Random House, ca. 1940), *This Freedom* (Random House, 1942), *Plays for Americans* (Farrar & Rinehart, ca. 1941), *Oboler Omnibus* (Duell, Sloan & Pearce, ca. 1945); *Radio Dramas in Action*, ed. Erik Barnouw (Farrar & Rinehart, ca. 1945); *The Writer's Radio Theatre, 1940-1941*, ed. Norman S. Weiser (Harper & Bros., ca. 1941); *The Writer's Radio Theatre, 1941*, ed. Norman S. Weiser (Harper & Bros., ca. 1942).

The Fall of the City, with its powerful indictment of passive acceptance of dictatorship, seemed to prove the correctness of the theory which MacLeish carried on in practice in *Air Raid* (1938) and repeated in the Foreword to that dramatic anticipation of Warsaw, Rotterdam, and Coventry. In *Air Raid*, MacLeish pushed to the limit his thesis that "a radio play consists of words and word equivalents and nothing else." Among the town noises he introduced "a woman's voice, very high and clear and pure, singing a scale." He increased the allusiveness of the sound effect: "A siren [air raid] sounds at a distance like a hoarse parody of the singing woman's voice: rising, shrieking, descending." He played the singing woman's voice, the siren, the plane motors, the screams of the other women, against each other, and on them he built the sound effect with which he closed the play.

The diminishing music note again. Over it the voice of the Singing Woman rising in a slow screaming scale of the purest agony broken at last on the unbearably highest note. The diminishing drone of the planes fades into actual silence.⁴

In this fusion of music, sound, and voice MacLeish seemed to be bursting through the self-imposed limitation of the theater of words. But he retained the theory, and in the ten radio scripts broadcast in February, March, and April, 1944, and published as *The American Story*, he appeared deliberately to refrain from using the techniques developed by others in the intervening six years. The scripts seem, by comparison with those of Corwin, Oboler, and Stephen Vincent Benét, to be self-denyingly austere. MacLeish restricts

himself to the use of words and limits sound effects and music to the barest essentials. Time and again he builds a scene in which the hearer or reader expects music and sound to heighten the mood or meaning, and time and again he limits sound and music or ignores them entirely. With words, assisted only infrequently by dramatization, choral effects, and a rare musical instrument, he attempts to re-create the splendors of Inca and Aztec civilizations. One leaves the broadcast and the script with a feeling of unrealized riches.

MacLeish was fully aware of what he was doing. In the Foreword to *The American Story* he repeats his earlier dictum.

Because radio is limited mechanically to sound, and particularly to the sound of speech, radio is capable of a concentration upon the speech itself, the text itself, which can give words a life and a significance they rarely achieve outside the printed page. . . . It is, or should be, possible for radio, therefore, to present a given text loyally and literally and simply, and yet in such a perspective and with such a focus of attention as to give breath and presentness and meaning to its words.⁵

In the succeeding paragraph MacLeish makes it clear that he is speaking not merely of his scripts but of radio drama in general.

. . . . The contemporary effort seems to be directed to the development of radio not as a stage at all but as an instrument. Gifted writers and directors have learned how to play the instrument effectively and with feeling. Music has been artfully blended with speech to evoke emotion. Skillful devices have been employed to produce dramatic effects. But the earlier hope for a new stage on which the spoken word, freed of all external paraphernalia, should create by its own power and eloquence the emotions of which it alone is capable, has not been realized. If anything, it is more remote today than it was ten years ago.⁶

⁴ *The Revised College Omnibus*, ed. James Dow McCallum (Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1940), p. 1070.

⁵ Pp. x-xi. Italics mine.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. xi.

MacLeish accurately indicates the direction most radio writers have taken; they do regard radio as an instrument and not "as a stage for the word." They do not accept the thesis that "a radio play consists of words and word equivalents and nothing more." They believe and demonstrate that sound and music can present heightened feeling and meaning as words alone cannot.

Stephen Vincent Benét, like MacLeish, a poet, made fuller use than MacLeish of the opportunities of radio as a dramatic medium. The scripts printed in *We Stand United*⁷ were chiefly propaganda written in the pre-Pearl Harbor and early war years; we are not likely to hear many of them again. From some of them, unfortunately, many cues seem to have been omitted in printing, and it is difficult to be sure how the broadcast would sound. The scripts, nevertheless, reveal Benét's understanding of the flexibility of the radio medium. "We Stand United" is a spoken editorial; the six letters to "Dear Adolf" are dramatic monologues in the American idiom; "They Burned the Books" is a dramatic protest worthy of a place beside Milton's *Areopagitica*; and "A Child Is Born" is a timelessly timely drama of the immediate effect of the Christ child's birth on the innkeeper, his bitter wife, their servants, and a passing thief.

In his radio plays, as in his poems and short stories, Benét shows constantly his mastery of everyday speech; it rings so true that one reads pages without being aware of the speech itself. He brought to radio, also, his feeling for the graphic phrase. Jim Hunter laconically reports that his journey from the Great Lakes to Washington took him "one pair of moccasins—call it a moon and a half—."⁸

⁷ *We Stand United: And Other Radio Scripts* (Farrar & Rinehart, ca. 1945).

A housewife, in eight lines, epitomizes the life of all housewives:

I go up and down
On my day's small business that never begins
or stops
Because a family never begins or stops,
It keeps on being a family, every day.
—The leftover steak and the socks and the
school reports,
The child with the temperature and the watch
at night,
The new kind of salad where Tom will say
"What's this?"
But I'll give him waffles, too, and so he won't
mind.⁹

Master of words as he was, Benét also used all the other devices of the radio instrument to intensify "They Burned the Books." Fire-music, an ominous tolling bell, the crackle of flames, and dramatized episodes paint a backdrop to the words of Schiller, Heine, and Benét himself speaking through the narrator:

Books are not men, and yet they are alive.
They are man's memory and his aspiration,
The link between his present and his past,
The tools he builds with, all the hoarded
thoughts,
Winnowed and sifted from a million minds,
Living and dead to guide him on his way.¹⁰

Benét's stated theory of radio, similar to MacLeish's, is expressed in the prologue-like opening to "A Child Is Born":

I'm your narrator. It's my task to say
Just where and how things happen in our play,
Set the bare stage with words instead of props
And keep on talking till the curtain drops.
So you shall know, as well as our poor skill
Can show you, whether it is warm or chill,
Indoors or out, a battle or a fair,
In this, our viewless theater of the air.¹¹

And yet Benét's practice goes far beyond this theory; when the innkeeper's

⁸ "The Undefended Border," *ibid.*, p. 131.

⁹ "Dear Adolf: 4. A Letter from a Housewife and Mother," *ibid.*, p. 41.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 107.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

wife sees the Virgin, she stops in mid-sentence and Benét writes the cue:

She sees the Virgin, who does not speak throughout this scene but is represented by music.¹²

Clearly here, as elsewhere, Benét breaks through the limitations of the stage of words and, to communicate meaning and emotion, draws upon the other resources of the radio instrument.

MacLeish and Benét became radio-wrights only after they had established their habits of expression in other media; the two best writers radio has yet produced, Norman Corwin and Arch Oboler, learned their trade by writing for the air. Both are clever craftsmen, and Corwin is, in addition, a poet, although he denies the charge.¹³

Arch Oboler has been writing longer and has written more radio plays than any other radio-wright who has earned distinction for the quality of his work. His first play, *Futuristics*, broadcast in November, 1933, as part of the dedicatory program for Radio City, antedates Columbia Workshop by two-and-a-half years. Twice in his career he wrote weekly scripts for the "Lights Out" horror series, turning out more than seventy-five plays in the first assignment alone. In 1939 and 1940 he wrote a fifty-three-week series of more than sixty-five plays, since for some of the broadcasts he used two or three short scripts instead of one thirty-minute play. During the war he wrote, directed, and produced radio plays at every opportunity, to further the country's war effort and to make another attack upon the dictators, whom he was one of the first to recognize as the menace they later demonstrated to all that they were. In addition, Oboler has

written many original scripts for commercial programs.

In contrast to MacLeish and Benét, Arch Oboler is pre-eminently and almost solely a dramatist. He uses the full resources of the radio instrument, but only to advance his dramas and to develop the ideas which lie behind most of them. He was the first to incorporate, in "This Lonely Heart," a full symphony orchestra in a radio play, but he never uses music for itself alone. He includes only those sound effects which will help the listener to visualize the "blind drama" of the air. His lines are bald prose which never calls attention to itself yet is a wholly adequate medium for his purposes.

Historically, Oboler has been an innovator, but he has not been notable as an experimenter. For most of his plays he uses, with equal success, straight continuity or flashback. In plays like "Mr. Whiskers," "The Bathysphere," and "Holiday 194x" he begins on a low pitch, depending on incident to hold the listener, and builds slowly to the climactic moment which comes in the last, or one of the very last, speeches. In such plays as "This Lonely Heart," "Ivory Tower," and "Mr. Ginsburg," he opens with a half-explained dramatic moment, tells the story by flashback or stream-of-consciousness, and returns at the end to the opening scene, which now vibrates with meaning. Whatever the method, he seldom contrives a punch line and never shouts. He depends heavily on understatement and lets the logical terminal speech end the play.

Oboler has always written and fought for the program of ideas. This interest was apparent before and during the war in his anti-Fascist plays, but it had been apparent also in the "Lights Out" series and in the commercial plays. He packs

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 170.

¹³ Cameron Shipp, "Corwin of the Airwaves," *Coronet*, XIX (December, 1945), 38.

his dramas with action but focuses attention less on the action than on the reasons behind it and the consequences of it. Oboler's plays, consequently, offer the listener and the reader an understanding of personality and a mature content rarely found in the millions of words per day that flood from our amplifiers.

Norman Corwin, the most famous alumnus of the Columbia Workshop and first winner of the Wendell Willkie "One World" award, is by common consent the first of radio-wrights. He has been called by Arch Oboler, who is best qualified to judge, "radio's greatest poetic talent,"¹⁴ and his reputation as a director is equal to his reputation as a writer.

Corwin is the virtuoso of the radio instrument. More than any other writer he has experimented with it, investigated its possibilities, and written amazingly original scripts which call for the fullest use of its resources. He weaves words, sounds, and music into a logical fabric that does not ravel. His words sing, and his sounds and music

. . . . captivate the sense by metaphoric utterance, by mood-stuff and far-ranging concepts . . . say things in terms of other things, dissolve and modulate and set up new vibrations in the chambers of imagination.¹⁵

He calls for music that is "mighty like a rock, segueing to a glass of tomato juice in the morning"¹⁶ and for horns that "point to where the voice is pointing."¹⁷ He asks for music that is the "base of a pyramid, with a suggestion of suspense. It holds behind the following and builds progressively"; and a page later he gives the cue, "Music: Peak of the pyramid;

¹⁴ *Oboler Omnibus*, p. 191.

¹⁵ "Anatomy of Sound," *More by Corwin*, pp. 245-46.

¹⁶ "Cromer," *More by Corwin*, p. 43.

¹⁷ "The Long Name None Could Spell," *ibid.*, p. 129.

triumphant."¹⁸ He opens a memorial to Czechoslovakia with a direction for idea-weighted music:

Prelude: a statement of a five-note theme accented in the same way as the spoken name "Czechoslovakia." It is strong, as though you were declaring, "This is the country of a great ally and we are much in earnest."¹⁹

As Corwin makes music carry the usual burden of words, so he intensifies the meaning of words by using the techniques of music. In "Untitled" he creates a theme in the music teacher's report of Hank Peters' commonplace experience as a music pupil.

He started with the violin at the age of 12 and went as far as the third position. I'm sorry to say he wasn't a very good pupil. I understand his mother had a hard time making him practice. When he was about 15 he got a sudden passion to be a drummer and so he gave up the violin. I advised against him doing it but he was all caught up with traps and snares and paraphernalia and I suppose he had to have his fling. There's no accounting for the tastes of adolescents. But to get back to young Peters: when he was 19 or so, he got to appreciate good music. . . .²⁰

Then Corwin packs the commonplace with significance as the unidentified "Voice" plays a variation on the music teacher's theme.

Private First Class Peters was a good-enough music pupil soon to see relationships between the concert repertoire at home, And how the boys were doing on the beachhead; And good enough to recognize that whereas \$4.40 would buy two good seats to the municipal auditorium to hear the symphony It was a hot and smoking 75 did the arguing for Mendelssohn and Gershwin and the deeply non-Aryan St. Louis Blues.

Among the heavy drums he sat and played the bazooka, played the sweet bazooka, played it sweet and low and ducked his head from time to time as the chords crashed all about him;

¹⁸ "We Hold These Truths," *ibid.*, p. 69.

¹⁹ "The Long Name," *ibid.*, p. 127.

²⁰ *Coronet*, XVII (November, 1944), 145.

And when the raid was over he would rise and pick his pack up and go on against the kettle-drums, against the snares and booby traps and paraphernalia of the well-rigged enemy.

And by such tactics, his and others of his band storming the Appian hill up as far as the third position,

The comfort of a box seat at the Met was made secure. . . .²¹

In the solemn ending of *On a Note of Triumph*, his full-hour celebration of V-E Day, Corwin takes familiar themes from the Bible and plays his variations on them, merging the religious idiom of centuries with the idiom of modern scientific warfare.

Lord God of trajectory and blast
Whose terrible sword has laid open the serpent
So it withers in the sun for the just to see,
Sheathe now the swift avenging blade with the
names of nations writ on it,
And assist in the preparation of the plough-share.²²

Although Corwin insists that *On a Note of Triumph* is a "non-poem,"²³ it, like most of his scripts, is written in highly metaphorical language, for Corwin is a master of the allusive word, and his wordplay ranges from the trivial to the solemn.

He puns and coins words recklessly. He sends a dead dog to "Curgatory" and creates "Deletius, god of censorship." He admires a radio actor's "sleight-of-mike" technique and his ability to "defy radio's laws of gravity." He describes a desired bit of music as "a schmaltzy Rumanian combination playing a good five-cent *tzigarnya*." His poll-makers pursue public opinion "at a Gallup," and he calculates the cost of "blank verse per

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

²² *On a Note of Triumph* (Simon & Schuster, 1945), p. 69. The concluding four stanzas of this script were published as a special feature, with a painting by Lewis Daniel, in *Collier's*, November 18, 1944.

²³ Foreword, *ibid.*, p. [7].

metric foot" and of "two gross imitation Wagner."

This wordplay finds a logical extension in carefully turned phrases which have the succinctness of proverbs: "Good things don't come running when you whistle for them" and "There are no barefoot pleasures in these hobnail times." His metaphors may be highly compressed—"Our language beats against its limitations"—or expanded to cover pages of print or minutes of playing time, like the operation metaphor in "A Soliloquy To Balance the Budget."²⁴ This power of words enables him, in the same script, to epitomize the spiritual worth and physical worthlessness of the human brain in two sharply antithetical words—"this *majestic mush*." He knows the power of simple words; at the end of whimsical directions to a designer who is to turn out a brain, he brings the reader up short with the direction, "It must be made of air and dust and water and a little passion and a little pain."²⁵

Corwin writes with equal success on a wide range of subjects and over the whole gamut of moods. He tells the story of a boy's search for his dog in "The Odyssey of Runyon Jones" and of a civilization's search for liberty in "We Hold These Truths," of a five-and-ten-cent-store clerk's day-dreams in "Mary and the Fairy" and of a soldier's questions at the moment of victory in *On a Note of Triumph*. He writes of dancing caterpillars in "My Client Curley" and of spiraling nebulae in "Good Heavens." In "The Descent of the Gods," he brings the Greek gods from Olympus in the manner of Thorne Smith and, after the satire and whimsy, he gives Apollo a speech that lifts the reader's heart with a characteristic touch of high seriousness.

²⁴ *Thirteen by Corwin*, pp. 167-68.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 171.

Man is greater than the gods in many ways, and lower than the ant in many others. He can fly the air and swim under the sea, and fling his voice around the world; turn night into day with filaments; grind lenses which draw the moon down until its mountain peaks are barely twenty miles away; take pictures of men's insides from without; send heat and light and horsepower across four hundred miles of desert on a copper wire; listen to sounds of seven continents by fingering a knob, or clock the yawning heavens with a trigger-hair and tell you twenty thousand years ahead what second of what minute of what hour of what day the sun will be eclipsed and where the fleeting shadow will be seen. . . .

Yet give this wonder-man a simple problem such as how to keep from killing several million other wonder-men just like himself each twenty years or so, and he is baffled and distraught. This man who understands the vast complexity of logarithms and who has formulas for light and heat, for logic and hydraulics, and for stress and strain—this same man can divide so poorly there is want amid abundance; he can build a city overnight, yet there are shelterless; he understands the meaning of the spectrum of a star, yet not the meaninglessness of the color of a skin. . . .

But I shall not despair, for man has in him all the seeds of his own betterment, and one day they shall sprout. When that day comes, the vines shall reach to heaven and the gods climb down.²⁶

Corwin believes in the common man and the common decencies. He scorns the tyrant, whether dictator, editor, or radio popularity rating. He treats the little man with a sympathetic understanding which is too full of dignity to sink to pity.

Corwin has experimented more extensively and successfully than any other writer with the forms which radio plays may take. His scripts are all dramatic in impact, whether heard or read, but are often not dramatic in structure. In "To Tim at Twenty" Corwin uses the immediacy of the letter-form as a means of "semidramatic" expression. "Anatomy

of Sound" is an essay, an illustrated lecture on the use of sound in radio plays. "Daybreak," which carries the listener on a twenty-four-hour dawn circuit of the earth (in thirty minutes), is part poem and part essay. "Old Salt," a character sketch with a bare dramatic skeleton, is chiefly a tall-tale session. "A Man with a Platform" is a revue-like satire. "A Soliloquy To Balance the Budget," a tour de force, is formless and holds interest only by sheer brilliance of expression and variety of invention. "We Hold These Truths" and "The Long Name None Could Spell" are pageants of words, with dramatized episodes in place of a pageant's pantomime and with brilliance of diction and sound in place of richness of costume and setting.

Scripts such as "Untitled" and *On a Note of Triumph* cannot be classified, for nothing before has been quite like them. They are the result of a fusion of a new medium, an original mind, and an idea.²⁷

"I end with a requiem for radio, a requiem written by a moving pencil of electronic rays converging from a cathode tube," wrote Arch Oboler at the end of the *Oboler Omnibus*. When finally the television screen takes its accepted place as part of the furniture of most American homes and "blind radio" suffers the fate of silent movies, there will remain the shelf of radio plays. Some of the scripts on that shelf will be little more than historical curiosities, but others can claim a place beside the best novels, short stories, and legitimate dramas of the past decade.

²⁶ Corwin's talents and versatility have carried him into other dramatic fields. He was (March, 1946) working on a Corwin-written-and-directed movie reported to be based on his 1941 radio play "Mary and the Fairy." His 1941 radio play "Samson," renamed "The Warrior," and set to music by Bernard Rogers, won (February, 1946) the Alice M. Ditson award for a new short American opera.

²⁶ More by Corwin, pp. 116-17.

On Teaching Our Democratic Heritage

MENTOR L. WILLIAMS¹

ONE of the peculiar characteristics of democracy as we practice it in America, at least as most of us practice it, is the ease with which we forget we are a democracy. In our merry, somewhat ignorant, pursuit of security, success, and happiness, we think little of the form of government, the way of life, and the philosophy of man to which we give ostentatious lip service. Ours is an outer, not an inner, democracy.

Another odd aspect of American democracy is the amazing gift some have for discovering a "state of peril." Every movement or crisis that threatens the ideals upon which the republic rests calls forth a host of critics who view with alarm or sound the tocsin. Once the crisis is fairly upon us, this group, frightened by the general apathy of a heedless public, demands that measures be taken to inoculate the entire population with the serum of democracy.

A combination of these two phenomena invariably produces a "movement" to preserve our heritage, to save our culture, to protect the democratic way of life. Thus the Progressive Era of the first fifteen years of this century, locked in bitter conflict with the trust and the political machine, was accompanied by a vast amount of re-evaluation, of which Herbert Croly's *The Promise of American Life* and John Macy's *The Spirit of American Literature* were the outstanding monuments. The first World War brought frantic attempts to re-write or

to reorient the story of our national life and literature in terms of the slogan, "Save the World for Democracy." Few of them survived the period in which they were written, as a glance at any comprehensive bibliography will testify. During the thirties American literature and American history were again assessed for their contributions to the "full life" and the "economy of abundance." Mr. Calverton, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Cowley, and their liberal and radical colleagues found that America's real heritage lay in the rebellious spirit of the common man. From 1940 to 1945 we retraced the familiar pattern in a national academic passion for re-emphasizing the democratic way of life. An outbreak of articles in the popular and scholarly journals, of books of readings for college composition courses, of source readings for army-navy courses, and of anthologies for the general public attested this fever for things American. The names of a few are significant: *The American Heritage*, *We Hold These Truths*, *The American Spirit*, *The Voice of Democracy*, *Voices of Liberty*, *The Democratic Tradition in America*. They were legion.

These "new and vital approaches to our democratic heritage" usually took the form of special selections of democratic expression from Roger Williams through Thomas Jefferson, from Abraham Lincoln down to Franklin Roosevelt and the statements of the O.W.I. Some anthologists went so far as to return to the "glamorous mythology" of our past —the mythology of Kit Carson and

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Molly Pitcher, of Marcus Whitman and Ethan Allen—and built up the “spirit of America” around its heroes. The basic problem in teaching democracy, it seemed, was to find the best and most direct and explicit statements of our democratic creed and enforce them upon our students with a “Heil” and “Farewell.”

There were a few curriculum changers who extended our democratic heritage back to the Hellenic and Hebraic origins. Our democracy must be neither national nor racial. The tradition of democracy was traced back to Greece and Palestine. Since both Greeks and Hebrews were believers in the significance of man as man, our democratic heritage naturally began with the Bible, the *Odyssey*, and Plato's *Republic*. From there it could be pushed on through Chaucer's *Prologue*, More's *Utopia*, *Hamlet*, Browning's “Saul,” “The American Scholar,” *The Scarlet Letter*, *Of Human Bondage*, *Babbitt*, and *John Brown's Body*. A broad and all-embracing heritage—as broad as the universe that Margaret Fuller embraced so fulsomely. The democratic heritage went source-hunting!

Still others, in their zeal to perpetuate what they believed to be the essence of the democratic tradition, maintained that we had to teach every point of view, no matter how antagonistic it might be to the democratic concept. We could not indoctrinate positively for our way of life; instead we had to teach by indirection, teach so liberally, so tolerantly, that our pupils would quietly and rationally ease themselves into the stream of democratic thinking and living. So apparently true, yet so dangerously false!

All these views of teaching the democratic heritage assumed that it is primarily *contact* with the literature that produces the desired effect. Somehow the

literary selection would serve as a touchstone, and all who came in contact with it would, of necessity, be transmuted into fine upright specimens of democratic manhood and womanhood. Provide the book of readings, let it be read faithfully and intelligently, and the transformations would be achieved. Perhaps it required a little prodding here and there, a little forced feeding now and then; the end justified the means. But the touchstone theory of teaching democracy, the contagion theory of education, offered precious little hope for a world that was trying to be born! We were further led to believe that our “democratic heritage” was, somehow, an end in itself; that if it could be perpetuated through this generation, something good and dear and sublime would have been preserved. We were faced with the same situation that the teachers of the classics, both the ancient and the modern, were long ago faced with—trying to preserve something fine without understanding its relevance to a constantly changing world.

Emerson spoke wisely when he announced, “Each age it is found must write its own books”; each age, more accurately, must reinterpret and revitalize its heritage. A heritage worshiped for itself is of no value. This is the difficulty with us as Americans. We have so far failed to dynamize our heritage that it remains merely a form, a ritual, a dead symbol of former vitality. That is the reason why, in each critical season, we have reverently taken our heritage out of its ceremonial wrappings and used it as a talisman, a luck piece against the evil times that have befallen us. Totemism signifies a feeble and unstable culture.

Latin and Greek came to be known as “dead languages” and the literature

written in those languages as "embalmed literature" when the teachers of those languages and literatures ceased to view them as part of the living present. To our eighteenth-century philosophers of state the Greeks and the Romans were very much alive—their law, their history, their politics, and their society were active components of their thought and practice. Where would Adams and Jefferson and Hamilton have been without a thorough grounding in classical theories of the state? What would Emerson have been without his Plato? But, somewhere along the line, the dead hand of tradition fell upon the ideas of the classic writers, and the philologist and the literary antiquarian supplanted the philosopher and the teacher. The learning of Latin became an end in itself, feebly justified because it helped students master prose style, understand grammatical constructions, and recognize English words of Latin origin. So it is with our own democratic heritage. The war is over. Our "heritage" has again become moribund. To be of value to our age it must be recast to fit the conditions of our age.

I

We can teach our democratic heritage through literature, *if we translate that heritage into the idiom of the modern student*. The heritage is always modern; it is we, the teachers of the heritage, who rob it of its life-giving property. The student, be it known, lives in a far more real world than we; he craves guidance, and we let him stumble among the ruins of the past. Why? Because we have so cluttered our minds with historical machinery—origins, tendencies, movements, influences, and conditions—that we cannot feel the throb of pulsating life in the thing we teach. We see the selection, microscopically, in a particular, con-

textual setting and cannot get the selection into a different setting. As Professor Frederic White has expertly phrased it:

The purpose of the historical method is to enable the student to understand literature, with the pious hope that if he understands it he will come to like it. The method of attaining this end is to focus the attention of the student on the historical context of the work of literature. Unfortunately, this procedure reinforces the student's instinctive belief that past literature has no conceivable relation to our own age. . . . Hence, paradoxically, the historical approach to literature, far from bringing students closer to the past, merely provides them with a convincing argument for ignoring the past, for disregarding its accumulated experience, its philosophy, its literature.²

Most teachers of literature would be shocked if they were told that "you believe in the Constitution because what was good enough for the Founding Fathers is good enough for you." Yet their theory of literature is precisely the same: "Since literature, historically examined, derives its meaning from the age that gave rise to it, it must be studied in the light of that age. If it was good enough for that age, it is good enough for me if I understand the age that produced it." Small wonder, then, that one occasionally catches on the student's face that surreptitious glance which conveys to his neighbor, "This is all a lot of hokum, isn't it?" As long as we continue in the habit of studying all the particulars surrounding Milton's *Areopagitica*, we merely confirm the student in his belief that Milton was an old fogey who did not know anything about radar or the atomic age. If, however, we can disassociate the general principle from the seventeenth-century particulars, the student can recognize that Milton is talking about the second freedom and radioelectronics. If we can separate "freedom

² "Instruments of Darkness," *College English*, May, 1943, p. 489.

of worship" from the particulars of Roger Williams' controversy with John Cotton, the student recognizes a principle that applies equally to situations in twentieth-century America. If we can separate Jefferson's concept of the individual free-man from the contextual setting of the Age of Enlightenment, the student will see that Jefferson is meaningful in an age of collectivism and urban social organization. If we can separate the Gettysburg Address from the conditions of 1863, we can teach students that it is a living challenge to our age to produce a "government of the people, by the people, for the people." Left in that setting, they have come to believe that this desirable condition had already been achieved when Lincoln uttered his immortal words, and they are confused by all the furor over the poll tax and the rebirth of the Ku Klux Klan. We must learn to consider the student in his relation to his total environment. He is not living in the day of Magna Charta or of the Declaration of Independence; he is living in the day of the National Labor Relations Act, of an emasculated O.P.A., of a tragic housing shortage. Unless we make the past relevant to these things, he will reject it and listen, instead, to some native demagogue who can offer him a vital present, and he will accept that instead of something better. The world has changed since 1620, 1776, 1789, and 1863. Individuals no longer live in an economically individualistic world, a world of "free enterprise"—the National Association of Manufacturers to the contrary. They live in a world that is or should be passing more and more rapidly into a unified, international societal organization. Are we adapting our "democratic heritage" to this changed order, or are we opposing our heritage to it in a Canute-like effort to hold it back? Are we interpreting our

"democratic heritage" in such a way that it can be extended to all people, or are we using it as a divine prerogative to be exercised by that select few who happened to be in a position to exploit its protection and its opportunities in the nineteenth century? A liberal, intelligent English teacher, brought up on the limited historical particulars of the Elizabethan age of exploration, was heard, recently, expounding the doctrine of Anglo-Saxon superiority over all the other peoples of the earth. She would have been horrified had she realized that in this instance she was thinking Hitler's thoughts after him!

In this connection it might be added that most teachers of literature are endowed with a peculiar variety of arrogance that totally unfits them to be interpreters of our "democratic heritage." We believe (with some degree of truth, it must be admitted) that we in the literary field have both the way and the light. We speak sneeringly of the crass materialism that permeates our culture; we invoke the wrath of the Parnassians upon the guileless head of a monster known as *scientism*; we openly deride the straw creature called "the economic man." Is it possible that we are so blind or so depraved that we cannot find room to live in the same world with these forces? Modify their operation—yes; counteract their evil influence—yes; but destroy them or attempt to destroy them, and, like Samson, we go to our own destruction. We can merit the confidence of our students when we show an understanding of these very real elements of their world; we gain their contempt when we, like Arnold's Merman, whine after those who forsake us.

II

We can teach our democratic heritage through literature, if we believe that litera-

ture should present the worth and dignity of the individual personality. Today we are privileged to occupy ringside seats at one of those "battles of the decade"—a sixteen-round bout between our literary practitioners and their critics. Shall literature and teachers of literature indoctrinate or tolerate? Does literature "see into the life of things," or does it propagandize for a cause? Does literature interpret, or should it indulge in special pleading? Over these questions a whole series of bitter debates has arisen. Mr. MacLeish shadowboxes the "irresponsibles." Mr. De Voto floors Mr. Brooks and Mr. Sinclair Lewis for the count of nine with his "literary fallacy" uppercut. Mr. Lewis, dazed, but hitting in the clinches, retaliates, and Mr. Malcolm Cowley, using the *argumentum ad hominem*, reduces De Voto to the status of cauliflower-eared pug-ugly. Mr. Thurber assails Mr. Steinbeck for not making irredeemable devils of his Nazis in *The Moon Is Down*, and Mr. James Farrell takes on all and sundry. Mr. Cerf, acting the part of literary boxing commissioner, raises the question of the eligibility of Ezra Pound. Yes, it's a great fight, but who is fighting what? Most of the current argument can be reduced to the simple category of name-calling—and rather cheap at that. Of what avail is it that one writer cries, "See what you ivory-tower boys have done"; if another wails, "See what you proletarians have failed to do"; if another shouts, "Look what chaos you 'unintelligibles' have produced"; while another cries in his beard, "You middle-of-the-roaders have missed the point"?

Perhaps all of them have missed the point. No one can legislate for the writer; no one can declare what ideas and attitudes the writer shall develop in his work. But we, as teachers, can look for the

abiding human qualities in the literature we teach, and we can help our students to recognize and absorb those qualities. The work of art need not be evaluated in terms of its expressed ideology alone. What is implied may be of more lasting value to young men and women than what is explicit. Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath* did more to restore or revive a waning faith in the dignity of the common man, the Okie, than all the legislative acts of the six years preceding its publication. Steinbeck was not trying to solve the problem of the Okies; instead he wanted America to believe in them, to believe that they were human and deserving of simple respect and love. Millions of readers found the Joads completely human personalities and appreciated their worth as human beings despite poverty and degradation. The reader will find, as Steinbeck intends he should, that society is responsible for the Okie's plight; beyond that Steinbeck does not go. He says that these people must combine their efforts in order to improve their condition, and he obviously hopes the reader will be sympathetic with collective action. Beneath all lies the idea that "no man is an Island"; that is the great implication for students today. We, their teachers, must lead them to Arnold's dictum: "And because all men are members of one great whole, and the sympathy which is in human nature will not allow one member to be indifferent to the rest or to have a perfect welfare independent of the rest, the expansion of our humanity . . . must be a *general expansion*."

"Literature," says James Farrell, "tells us what has happened to man, what could have happened to him, what man has imagined might happen to him. It presents to us the environments, the patterns of destiny, the joys and the sor-

rows, the tribulations, the dreams, the fantasies, the aspirations, the cruelties, the shames, the dreams of men and women. Life is full of mysteries, and one of the major mysteries of life is man himself. Literature probes into that mystery . . . permits man to understand himself . . . aids in making man human to himself." The business of literature, then, is with man, with the emotional, intellectual, and imaginative life which gives him meaning, stature, value, and dignity. Is not the most significant element in democracy the awareness of man himself—a being striving for wholeness and completeness, for growth and fulfillment? It is this concept that must come alive if our students are to find purpose in the study of our democratic heritage.

III

We can teach our democratic heritage through literature, *if we conceive of our function as teachers correctly*. When the heavy foot of social crisis presses hard upon the anthill of society, the scholarly mites scurry to their posts to do battle for their country, their freedom, and their culture. Some seek to spur the callous and the callow to patriotic zeal with the story of past efforts to preserve our priceless liberties. Some search for an expression of the democratic spirit, neatly packaged, so that all may have faith in the American dream that has nourished generations of noble-hearted Americans. Others delve into the complex of the past to find what is usable in an interpretation of the current crisis. All three motives need to be carefully scrutinized both for methods and for results. Certain dangers are at once evident: (1) The men or the ideas under consideration may be falsely interpreted in the heat of special bias. In the interest of achieving the appearance of national unity (i.e., the appear-

ance that all great Americans stood for the same basic principles), the contradictions, the variants, and the opposites are wantonly overlooked or minimized. Nowhere is this more evident than in the twists of interpretation to which Emerson has been subjected. He has been variously presented as a milk-and-water idealist (in spite of such a hard-hitting essay as "Politics"), as a collectivist and "fellow-traveler" even though he is generally considered the apostle of individualism, as a "rugged individualist" exemplifying the motto of David Harum: "Do unto others as you would be done by but do it first." Obviously, Emerson is none of these things, and we teachers do violence to our heritage if we impose such prejudiced interpretations upon our students. (2) Or, again, the ideas of the men being assessed may be falsely applied to the conditions of a vastly different world. Everyone is aware, of course, of the mistakes which this method has produced in the case of Walt Whitman. No amount of squeezing or distorting can change the essential Whitman, the poet of individualistic democracy, into an economic determinist. Yet it has been tried with what have been unfortunate or even dangerous results. Think of the confusion that occurs when the student, reading Whitman's own words, tries to square Whitman's acceptance of the whole of America with the critics' concepts of Whitman as a champion of the proletariat. (3) The search for a usable past is always a noble and inspiring pursuit. But here, too, care must be exercised. So often the idea of *usable* is merely a screen for the *traditional*. A traditional past may merely mean a past that supports the status quo. It is quite evident that evoking the traditional will in no way help us to achieve the new world order. John Winthrop's definition of lib-

erty or John Adams' conception of aristocratic leadership or Cooper's description of *The American Democrat* or Lowell's condescending view of democracy are parts of the traditional past of America, but they are not applicable to the present age. They are "exhibits" in the evolution of democracy as we know and practice it today. We cannot return to a past whose social conditions have disappeared or are rapidly disappearing. A usable past today must be a dynamic past, intelligible in terms of a changing world, a world changing quite obviously with startling suddenness and profound significance.

Let us be sure, then, that our study of the great figures and the great ideas in American literature is not marred by little motives and narrow outlooks. Teachers must be men and women of good will. It is not our function to administer a patriotic hypodermic; neither is it our function to make all literature perform intellectual tricks at our command. We are obligated to educate our students to read, to evaluate literature for its human content, its ethical and cultural ideals. "Education," Plato said, "makes good men and good men act nobly." Need we stop with less?

The Most Popular Foreign Language

RAOUL M. PÉREZ¹

AFTER several months in Japan the men in the army of occupation are still puzzled by Japanese reactions to the presence of English-speaking occupation troops. The men do not know whether that country's now publicly professed love of democracy is a mere *modus vivendi* or whether the country really means to emancipate its enslaved women. But they are certain that, regardless of what happens after the occupation, American influence will remain strong. Women will not volunteer to return to their former position of servitude or resign their newly won places in the Diet. Neither will the English which the people have learned during the occupation be completely forgotten, in spite of the slump that English studies may be

expected to suffer when the necessity of communicating directly with thousands of English-speaking occupation troops in the conqueror's own language ceases to exist; for English in Japan, like German and other foreign languages in our own country, has had its ups and downs.

The great popularity of English just before Pearl Harbor was achieved in Japan during the short space of less than a century and without the stimulus that foreign languages have received in the United States from large minority groups who have brought their native tongues across the seas and continue to cultivate them at home and in the schools of the country of their adoption. To overcome the lack of native English teachers Japan sent young men to Europe with such success that graduate studies in English literature now flourish at the Imperial University of Tokyo under the direction of Professor Takeshi Saito, a graduate of

¹ Formerly professor of Romance languages, Xavier University, New Orleans; a member of the United States Office of Information and Education in Japan; at present a microphone interpreter at the United Nations Headquarters.

Oxford, whose accent is decidedly Oxonian. There is a little irony in the observation that the library of the most important university in Japan, unquestionably its most beautiful building, is a Rockefeller gift. The money for the construction came from the United States, but the ideas came from England, for the best-known professors on the campus were trained on the other side of the Atlantic.

The American soldier has made English the most popular foreign language in the world. To a sailor, however, must go the credit of first showing the Japanese the power of English in commerce and international relations. A fleet led by Commodore Perry visited the city of Yedo, as Tokyo was known, in 1853. Soon after he left, English replaced Dutch as the favorite foreign language in the schools. The influx of American missionaries gave an impetus to English studies, and the Japanese government of the Meiji era made it a part of the national policy to promote the study of English as a means of bringing Western culture into the country and establishing friendly relations with the United States.

Among those who championed the study of English during the Meiji era was Arinori Mori, a man who studied in both England and the United States, favored Westernization, and became minister of education. He considered the mastery of English by the Japanese an "absolute necessity." Prince Kinmochi Saionji, another minister of education during the same era, strongly favored the study of English as a means to promote scientific education. Opposition was stimulated by the rise of anti-Japanese feeling in California. According to Nishizawa, "the rise and fall of English formed a barometer of national sentiment in regard to American-Japanese

relations." The nationalists became strong opponents of English studies. Jiron, who had served in the government as minister of education two years before, wrote in 1916 that English should be removed from the school curriculum because it encouraged the evil habit of worshiping England and the United States. After the passage of the Japanese exclusion act in 1924 opposition increased. It was claimed that the emphasis placed on English instruction in the schools misled the young generation in regard to both England and the United States. With the Manchurian incident of 1931 English was either removed from the schools or made elective. This was done in spite of the protest of the Tokyo Society of Teachers of English, which insisted on the cultural importance of the language and on its value as a tool in the national policy. After Pearl Harbor the extreme nationalists not only put a complete stop to English instruction but all English teachers were dismissed and anyone known to speak the language was placed under suspicion.

Today, of course, English is considered absolutely essential to the very survival of the nation. It is one of the major studies in the educational program of young Prince Akihito, who may some day succeed his father to the imperial throne. The English teachers are now the most respected and sought-after men in Japan, though many of them have no time to teach, for they have duties as translators and interpreters with the army of occupation. Instruction in English is carried on in the schools, out of the schools, in the parks, whenever a friendly soldier meets the eager Japanese student, even in department stores, which require their clerks to learn enough of the foreign language to wait on their richest customers, the American soldiers. Phrase

books are best sellers; almost every Japanese carries one in his pocket. This writer once made a discovery that was not altogether unpleasant while compiling lists of Japanese phrases with English equivalents for distribution among our men in Tokyo. It developed that too many copies were going to the Japanese employed by the unit. A quick investigation showed that they wanted them to learn the English phrases! Naturally they were taking some home for their friends.

The American soldier, on the contrary, is making no effort to learn Japanese, for not only has he a natural apathy toward foreign languages, but he has made the rather pleasant discovery that the people with whom he has to come in contact know or make it their business to learn enough English to understand him. The efforts of the army to organize Japanese classes under the most competent native teachers must all be considered failures. Nobody listens, except perhaps the Japanese, to the army course which is broadcast daily over the radio. It is the Japanese who is always begging for English lessons from the soldier, who is doing too good a job of it, as he realizes from time to time when he engages in verbal exchanges with the elevator boy or one of the handy men around the post. Then the soldier finds, to his surprise, that he often gets back as good as he can give, and in this the young Japanese boys are bolder than the ones who are old enough to realize why the soldier is there in the first place.

Nobody can predict, under these conditions, how many English words will pass over into the Japanese language. The number no doubt will be large. Before Pearl Harbor the number that had already been adopted was estimated by Japanese scholars at several thousands.

A survey of newspapers and magazines, conducted in 1928 over a period of a few months, yielded fourteen hundred words and phrases, most of which were by that time thoroughly naturalized. By far the greatest number are scientific and technical terms; sports and games are next, followed by terms related to food, clothing, and politics. English vocabulary had penetrated all the phases of Japanese life, even religion, for such terms as "Christian," "Catholic," "Christmas," "Bible," and even "Y.M.C.A." were known to almost everyone.

So thoroughly naturalized are some of the imported English words that they have extended their meanings in the new medium. Here are a few interesting examples: the elevator operator or the servant in the restaurant is referred to as "boi," whether it happens to be a boy or a girl, for the Japanese does not realize that the word has gender; "trump" is the Japanese word for foreign playing cards—for the native variety they use the Portuguese word "karuta" (*carta*); in the slang of Japanese university students "compa" (company) refers to informal gatherings in the dormitories after supper, and the hazing done by seniors when they return to the dormitories late at night under the influence of sake is called "storm"; even the literary word "Romanticism" was adopted under the form "Romanshugi" (from "shugi," "principle").

One of the most interesting cases of the borrowing of a foreign word by another language is the case of the English word "shirt," borrowed by the Japanese. Japanese scholars in Tokyo trace the history of the word to the visit of some British sailors to Japan some time after Commodore Perry's visit to the islands, when the Japanese were busily adapting the newly discovered Western culture to

their own use. When these British sailors visited Japan they were uniformed in immaculate white shirts, an article of clothing foreign to the Japanese, who became very much interested in them and asked what the sailors were wearing. The natural answer was that the British sailors were wearing "white shirts," but the Japanese, who, contrary to popular opinion, are accustomed to long words, took these two words as one, pronouncing it "waishatsu," dropping some consonants and adding a vowel; for they, like the musical Italians, dislike consonants and like all their words to end in vowel sounds. Soon the article of clothing as well as the English word for it became popular throughout the country. The Japanese, however, have never felt that "waishatsu" means anything but just "shirt." Now they wear shirts of a variety of colors, so that if you visit Tokyo, you will find that the men wear blue "waishatsu," gray "waishatsu," and other kinds of "white shirts." To them the term "waishatsu" means "shirt"; when they use the word "shatsu" they are really talking about their underwear, their undershirt.

The quick sketch given above of the past and present condition of English studies in Japan is ample proof that the notorious adaptability of the Japanese is very apparent in the field of foreign languages. One of the greatest barriers to the complete Westernization of the country is the system of ideographs, which

leading Japanese educators have long desired to discard because they retard for too long a period the education of the young. Professor Ichikawa, among others, wants to discard "cumbersome hieroglyphics" and adopt the Latin alphabet. Cultural and technical terms, he complains, are often translated by means of Chinese characters, with the result that the new terms have meaning to the eye but not to the ear. The solution to this problem is the introduction of the English terms themselves into the language, since Japanese is not fertile enough or capable of coping with world changes without the liberal adoption of loan words, and new articles and ideas will always continue to be imported from the outside. The duty of every student of English, believes Ichikawa, is to penetrate and identify himself with European thought in order to come back and fill the gaps in vocabulary and expression that he observes in his own language. Of the future of the Japanese language the well-known professor from the Imperial University wrote many years before Pearl Harbor: "The shaping of the future language rests with those who use it, and if each student of English contributes his quota, however infinitesimal, . . . we shall probably find ourselves nearer the solution of the various problems connected with our language and writing."²

² [Mr. Pérez writes us that the chairmen of the international committees of the United Nations, including the Russian delegate, Andrei Gromyko, all conduct these meetings in English.—EDITOR.]

International Understanding: An Experiment in Freshman English

SIGNI FALK¹

Now more than ever the world is very much with us, and more than ever have we the need for a greater understanding and a greater knowledge of other peoples, other ways of living, and ways of thinking different from ours. During the war years our horizons have widened immeasurably, so that many strange place names have become familiar. And yet in many cases the people who live in these foreign parts are still as strange to us as the names were when we first began hearing them. Most of us realize that we have insufficient information from which we can judge a distant people and that, before we can know how to live and work with them, we must have an elementary acquaintance with their problems and aspirations.

A course in freshman English can lay the groundwork for a more active world citizenship if that depends partly on a knowledge of other countries and other peoples, the kinds of work they do and their chances for making a decent living, how they worship and how they play, and something of their lives expressed in the best of their recent writers. It is within the province of an English class to organize material so that the student can hear the current news with greater discrimination and sense more readily the bias and prejudice that color each particular source of information.

There is a need for unified, significant

material for freshman English better than collections of essays on varied topics, most of which tend to scatter interest and effort. The focus of attention on a large unit of work can give meaning to each new assignment and leave with the student a feeling that he has gained fair acquaintance with one subject.

To help satisfy the present need for knowing people and places and for becoming aware of the forces which are now taking shape and which will probably be dominant agents in molding the future, a plan was set up for a high section in freshman English at Colby Junior College to explore the possibilities of world history, human geography, and the literary expressions of a few peoples.

In drawing up the outline of this course we had to admit certain limits. To attempt to cover the whole world would be naïve and superficial and would defeat our purpose. Although few instructors would agree entirely on countries chosen as focuses of attention, most people would agree that Americans should know something of the areas of China, Russia, and Latin America. Not only are these sections of the world almost complete strangers to many of us but they are also in a state of transition and development that promises them an even greater place in the affairs of the immediate future. Although not linked with us directly or politically, two other sections of the world, India and Africa, likewise little known and also emerging

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to a position of greater prominence, were incorporated into the plan rather than Britain or France or any of the other European countries, many of which are studied in the average academic program.

Since the first semester of a freshman English course should be largely of a service nature, to help students learn how to study, particular attention is given to material which requires them to take notes, to outline, to make summaries, and to write. The small pamphlets published by the Institute of Pacific Relations and the Foreign Policy Association lend themselves very well to this necessary training. Since a general pamphlet serves to introduce every country, there is repeated attention given to these service skills.

The program varies slightly with each country studied, but there are usually three projects. A brief survey of the land, the people, and the very recent political developments covered in the pamphlet reading is deepened through study of a novel or a group of short stories and poetry, native to the country whenever possible. Finally the students are asked to read, to take notes, to organize material, and to write a long paper.

In addition to these three main projects, the students are given definite library assignments covering various aspects of the life and thought of the people, quite extensive reading in periodicals, and controversial material, which takes on a different aspect against a background of information. There are additional suggested reading lists in fiction and poetry, travel, or journalistic discussion for those who read more easily and rapidly. Brief oral reports frequently supplement class discussions. Further practice in writing comes in the shorter papers, such as reports on reading, comparisons of books or articles, or an ex-

position of ideas gained from some of this collateral reading.

There are many possibilities of correlation with other phases of the educational program. The reading material is timely and immediately relative to much of the discussion that takes place in such courses as history, language, sociology, or art. Special lectures by other members of the faculty, discussions of art and music, or discussions of current political situations and economic problems have been an effective means of correlating the current reading of this class with other fields of study. There has also been an increased interest in newspaper and other casual reading, as evidenced by the active part students have taken in building up a bibliography that must be renewed continually.

A few practical problems need to be answered. A modest instructor who might feel unprepared to launch into so ambitious a course will find that, if he is reasonably well read, if he has an interest in people and a concern for the world-to-be, and if he is willing to do more reading than teaching from an anthology requires, he will be repaid, just as his students are, in the satisfaction of an exciting activity not limited to the classroom. As for textbooks, the expense for each student is limited to twelve dollars a year and large use is made of the resources of the library. We order duplicate copies only of those books generally recognized as valuable and trustworthy and make extensive use of the new pamphlet material such as that issued by various university groups and other research institutes.

Since this is an English class and not a course in history or social problems, we have attempted, whenever possible, to study the various peoples through their own literature. We have consciously

guarded against spending too much time on the wealth of travel observation and valuable journalistic reporting. In order to avoid a third and very real danger, a superficial attention only to that which is spectacular, there has been a constant attempt to search for basic issues and permanent national qualities. Although the range of material makes the course seem like a casual survey, the concentration of work at several points should serve as an introduction of permanent value.

In order to explain more fully what has been the extent of the course, to show the type of material that has received concentration and what reading has been collateral, and to suggest what kinds of subjects have been given for reading, the following bibliography and plan of study are presented.

CHINA

(Time allowed: about nine weeks)

I. BASIC READING

The Four Hundred Million, a short history of the Chinese, by Mary A. Nourse. Dramatically written, well documented, and valuable for its study of China and the West. Selections from this book provide a good foundation for later reading.

2. FICTION AND POETRY

Contemporary Chinese Stories, by Chi-Chen Wang. This collection of shorter pieces, stories, and sketches by modern Chinese writers is invaluable as a frank expression of the new China.

Dragon Seed, by Pearl Buck. Despite its tendency toward propaganda, this book gives a good picture of a small Chinese village during wartime.

The House of Exile, by Nora Waln. This book portrays an urban society through a wealthy city family and suggests the beauty of Chinese culture and refinement.

Translations from the Chinese, by Arthur Waley. These representative items from the older literature offer a medium for presenting some phases of Chinese philosophy and religion as well as character and humor.

3. GENERAL LIBRARY READING

Certain magazine articles and specific chapters are assigned, partly for additional information and partly as background for the long paper, the project which is to follow.

Pearl Buck, "Tell the People." Talks with James Yen about the Mass Education Movement, *Asia and the Americas*, special section, January, 1945.

Henry R. Lieberman, "Chiang Talks of His Hopes for China," *New York Times Magazine*, October 14, 1945.

Joseph Rock, "Life among the Lamas of Choni," *National Geographic Magazine*, November, 1928.

O. J. Todd, "Taming 'Flood Dragons' along China's Hwang Ho," *National Geographic Magazine*, February, 1942.

Charles Bell, *The People of Tibet*. A very readable account of a frontier people, with emphasis on the economic and domestic aspects of their life.

Carl Crow, *China Takes Her Place*. An account of China since 1911 and of the progress under the Kuomintang.

Malvina Hoffman, *Heads and Tales*. Selected for the illustrations of her sculptural studies of racial types.

George Hogg, *I See a New China*. A study of Chinese co-operatives, useful though outdated.

K. S. Latourette, *The Chinese, Their History and Culture*. A standard, recognized handbook and reference.

Owen Lattimore, *The Making of Modern China*. A recent book by an authority, many years a resident in China; an adequate one-volume history, particularly of the earlier times.

Lin Yutang, *My Country and My People*. Facile and pleasant reading; valuable for its contrasts between the oriental and the occidental character.

Edgar Snow, *Red Star over China*. A vivid picture of the Chinese Red Forces and of the improvements and developments made under their system.

Leland Stowe, *They Shall Not Sleep*. Selected particularly for the chapters on Chungking under fire.

Archibald Gibson Wenley and John A. Pope, *China*. "Smithsonian Institution War Background Studies," 1944. Topics: geography, language, history, foreign contacts, social organization and government, Chinese art, the Chinese mind.

Martin C. Yang, *A Chinese Village*. An excellent, comprehensive study of the life of the common people.

Y. C. Yang, *China's Religious Heritage*. An evaluation of China's religions, and individual chapters on Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, and Christianity.

H. F. MacNair (ed.), *Voices from Unoccupied China*. A series of talks on China, dealing with subjects like education, public health, and the present government.

4. RESEARCH PAPER

The topics are chosen from suggestions gathered from the above reading. Some of the topics selected are as follows: exiled universities, some issues between the Communists and the Nationalists, industrial co-operatives, position of women past and present, democratic development in partisan China, and primitive farming.

5. GENERAL READING

This part of the work, suggested readings in literature and the arts, was carried on as a kind of honors reading program, with special credit for reports. Some of the recommended books are as follows:

"Chinese Art." *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*. A fine survey copiously illustrated.

Pearl Buck, *The Good Earth*. The book which made many Americans first aware of China, and still worth reading.

Witter Bynner and Kiang Kang-hu, *The Jade Mountain*. A Chinese anthology.

Edgar Snow (ed.), *Living China*. A good introduction to modern China through several fiction writers.

Ch'ing-ch'un Shu (Lau Shaw), *Rickshaw Boy*. The story of the hardships and the dreams of a man who made his living from his own "bitter strength."

Alice Tisdale Hobart, *Oil for the Lamps of China*.

A contrast between American and Chinese life, from the end of the Manchu dynasty until the advent of Communism.

S. I. Hsiung, *Lady Precious Stream*. Modern dramatic version of an old Chinese story.

Lin Yutang, *The Wisdom of China and India*. An anthology of representative writers grouped under certain national characteristics.

Shu-jen Chou, *Ah Q and Others*. A collection of short stories and sketches by the modern Chinese realist, Lusin.

Keith West, *Winter Cherry*. Life and times in eighth-century China; the story of an emperor's concubine and of her escape and later marriage to the man she loved.

6. LECTURES

Two lectures on Chinese art were given by a member of the art department.

INDIA

(Time allowed: about six weeks)

I. BASIC READING

Restless India, by Lawrence Rosinger, published by the Foreign Policy Association. This is a scholarly but very readable account of the many problems and barriers which face that country of enigmas and great possibilities.

2. FICTION

Indigo, by Christine Weston. A very readable story, it gives an excellent picture of the paradoxes of India, of the conflict of eastern and western cultures, and of the pains of modernizing a land of so many antagonistic interests and beliefs.

3. GENERAL LIBRARY READING

Certain chapters and sections are recommended from the following books. This list does not attempt to cope with the contradictions of India but only to suggest something of the life of the country.

"House of Tata," *Fortune*, January, 1944. Comprehensive study of India's great industrial and philanthropic family.

John Fischer, "Closing a Deal in Kapurthala,"

- The New Yorker*, November 3, 1945. A visit with a maharajah.
- Theodore Roscoe, "Sun Touched." A short story about a weird religious cult at Benares.
- E. M. Forster, *Passage to India*. Racial, religious, and colonial questions presented in a novel now considered a classic.
- Geoffrey T. Garrett, *The Legacy of India*. A symposium of articles on modern India by various authorities; a recommended handbook.
- Ernest B. Havell, *A Handbook of Indian Art; Indian Sculpture and Painting*. These two companion volumes, useful as an introduction.
- Kalidasa, *Sakuntala*. A Sanskrit drama by a great third-century figure sometimes known as the Indian Shakespeare.
- Katherine Mayo, *Mother India*. Widely controversial in its day and still worth attention.
- Penderel Moon, *Strangers in India*. Observations of an intelligent British civil servant who had to cope with the problems of India.
- Jawaharlal Nehru, *Toward Freedom*. A comprehensive history and interpretation by one of India's greatest leaders of the differences between the East and the West.
- Krishna Nehru, *With No Regrets*. Valuable for the younger sister's personal comment on the world in which she and her brother have lived.
- Beverley Nichols, *Verdict on India*. A pro-British comment on many of the handicaps to Indian unity.
- T. A. Ramon, *Report on India*. One of the more graphic reports on customs, cults, castes, sacred cows, and other things.
- Vasanthi Rama Rau, *Home to India*. A young girl's return after several years' absence and the resulting impressions.
- Krishnal Shridharani, *My India, My America*. A fiery but thought-provoking picture of India by one of her sons.
- Rabindranath Tagore, *Fireflies; The Garden; Gitanjali*. Chosen for his interpretation of Indian temperament and thought.
- Hilda Wernher, *My Indian Family*. A European woman's account of her daughter's Indian marriage and adaptation to this strange country.
- Panchatantra*. Translated by Arthur Ryder. Some of the oldest fables of the world.

4. READINGS ON INDIA

A few of the short articles from the *Annals of the American Academy of Political Science* for May, 1944, are mimeographed for class reading, for outline, for reports, and for closer discussion than is possible with general assignments. There are several chapters worth consideration: India's human resources, nutrition and health, problems of rural life, handicrafts and cottage industries, or the influence of modern thought on India.

5. A SHORT RESEARCH PAPER

Some of the subjects which grow out of such reading are as follows: village life, purdah, the maharajah, public health, village industries, the dance, Pakistan, moneylenders, the caste system, symbols in Indian art, and Siva temples.

RUSSIA

(Time allowed: about nine weeks)

I. BASIC READING

Russia, by Sir Bernard Pares, Penguin edition. This brief history presents a sympathetic study of the Russian people and their revolution. In addition, we use the February, 1944, issue of the *Survey Graphic*, called *American Russian Frontiers*, with articles by such recognized authorities as Albert Rhys Williams, Lewis Gannett, Andrew Steiger, Maurice Hindus, and Vera Micheles Dean.

2. GENERAL LIBRARY ASSIGNMENTS

The following items are recommended in whole or in part.

- John Hersey, "Dialogue on Gorky Street," *Fortune*, January, 1945.
- Eric Johnson, "Russia Visit," *Life*, September 11, 1944.
- Sir Bernard Pares, "Religion in Russia," *Foreign Affairs*, July, 1943.
- John Scott, "Magnetic City, Core of Valiant Russia's Industrial Might," *National Geographic Magazine*, May 1943.
- Anna Louise Strong, "Russia Rebuilds," *Atlantic*, December, 1944.
- W. L. White, "Report on the Russians,"

Reader's Digest, December, 1944, and January, 1945.

William Henry Chamberlin, *The Russian Enigma*. Generally considered to be a factual account and likely to temper the overcritical as well as the overenthusiastic.

Joseph Davies, *Mission to Moscow*. "A record of confidential dispatches to the State department, official and personal correspondence, current diary and journal entries, including notes and comment up to October, 1941."

Walter Duranty, *U.S.S.R.* Readable, credibly accurate; one of the best recent comments on Russia.

Markoosha Fischer, *My Lives in Russia*. An attempted objective approach even though several of her friends were victims of the purges.

Samuel N. Harper, *The Russia I Believe in*. A collection of memoirs by a man whose long, first-hand knowledge of Russia makes his comments valuable.

Maurice Hindus, *Mother Russia*. Russia presented through its common people rather than through its leaders.

Alexander Kaun, *Soviet Poets and Poetry*. A survey of poetry in the U.S.S.R. from 1917 to 1941 with attention to the postsymbolists, the proletarian poets and theorists, and some of the recent writers in folklore.

Bertha Malnick, *Everyday Life in Russia*. A description of school, students, work outside school, foodshops, rest, and play.

Nicholas Mikhailov, *Land of the Soviets*. An economic geography.

Paul Nikolaevich and Michael Karpovich, *Outlines of Russian Culture*. Three volumes: Vol. I: Religion and the Church; Vol. II: Literature; Vol. III: Architecture, Painting, and Music. A general study.

Mikhail Sholokhov, *And Quiet Flows the Don*. A vigorous novel about the impact of the revolution on the Cossack country.

Konstantin Simonov, *Days and Nights*. A novel about the seige of Stalingrad.

Edgar Snow, *People on our Side*. Valuable for pictures of national types in striking situations.

Sidney and Beatrice Webb, *Soviet Communism: A New Civilization?* A positive statement about the Russian experiment by two of the top-ranking British sociologists.

Four Soviet Plays: *The Front*, by Alexander Korneichuk; *Invasion*, by Leonid Leonov; *The Russians*, by Konstantin Simonov;

Guerillas of the Ukrainian Steppes, by Alexander Korneichuk.

3. FICTION AND DRAMA

Best Russian Short Stories, edited by Thomas Seltzer. This collection seems to offer the best variety, and represents a small cross section of literary Russia. It serves the purpose better than a novel; the best novels are too long for class use.

The Cherry Orchard, by Anton Chekhov. This play is read for its contrast between the old and the new Russia.

4. COLLATERAL READING

Anton Chekhov, *Short Stories*, Modern Library. Nikolai Gogol, *The Overcoat and Other Stories*, edited by Constance Garnett; *Taras Bulba and Other Tales*, Everyman edition.

Maxim Gorky, *A Book of Short Stories*, edited by A. Yarmolinsky and Maura Budberg.

Alexander Pushkin, *Works*, edited by A. Yarmolinsky.

Count Leo Tolstoy, *Twenty-three Tales*, World Classics.

The Night of the Summer Solstice, and other stories of the Russian War, edited by Mark Van Doren.

5. LECTURES

Two lectures are given on modern Russian music, with recordings.

6. RESEARCH PAPERS

Some of the topics are as follows: the collective farms, child care and nursery schools, Russian industrial migration, community organization in the factories, opportunities for Russian women, the reconstruction corps, a recent season in the Russian theater, methods of increasing production.

AFRICA

(Time allowed: about four weeks)

I. BASIC READING

"Look at Africa," by W. G. and M. S. Gilbert, published by the Foreign Policy Association. Suggesting the varieties of territory and climate as a cause,

this study accounts for the wide divergence in the cultures found in this continent.

2. LIBRARY READING ASSIGNMENTS

The students are encouraged to read as extensively as time allows from the following list. The reading is checked partly in conference and partly in the group reports that are given to the class. Since the books are selected for their portrayal of different kinds of people and of life on the continent, it seems best to encourage as wide a coverage as possible.

Ben Lucien Burman, *Rooster Crows for Day*. The heart of jungle Africa presented through the eyes of a little Mississippi Negro boy.

Stuart Cloete, *Against These Three*. A biography of three African figures—the Boer, Paul Kruger; Cecil Rhodes, the empire builder; and Lobengula, priest-king; *Watch for the Dawn*. The free Boers in the African veldt about 1816; a story as dramatic as an American "Western."

F. S. Crafford, *Jan Smuts*. A colorful though not an adequate biography.

Isak Dinesen, *Out of Africa*. Earlier chapters recommended for their study of native manners and customs in Kenya.

André Gide, *Travels in the Congo*. Diary observations, valuable as first-hand information.

Osa Johnson, *I Married Adventure*. Included for its appeal to adventure and its sympathetic picture of Africa.

John Latouche and André Cauvin, *Congo*. Vivid pictorial and descriptive account of the Belgian Congo.

Julius Lips, *The Savage Strikes Back*. Listed for the illustrations which show how the Africans and other colored peoples see the white man.

Jean Kenyon MacKenzie, *Trader's Wife*. Two ways of dealing with the Negroes of tropic Africa—by slave trading or by the development of legitimate business.

Eslanda Goode Robeson, *African Journey*. Wife of the great singer and a distinguished anthropologist, the author records her impressions of a scientific trip to Africa.

Antoine de St. Exupéry, *Wind, Sand and Stars*. Graphic portrayal of the desert by a pilot whose plane was wrecked in the Sahara.

Olive Schreiner, *Story of an African Farm*. A

novel of the Cape Colony in the late nineteenth century, vivid with first-hand impressions.

For their study of the Negro transported to a white environment, the following items are added:

James Weldon Johnson, *The Creation*. A sermon in the vivid idiom of his own people.

Eugene O'Neill, *Emperor Jones*. Dramatic portrayal of a Negro's heritage and handicaps.

Richard Wright, *Black Boy*; *Native Son*. Two powerful novels raising the question of racial tolerance in our country.

LATIN AMERICA

(Time allowed: about six weeks)

1. BASIC READING

Good Neighbors, by Hubert Herring. In lieu of a group of pamphlets about all the various Latin-American countries, this book, though somewhat out of date, seems to be the best introduction.

2. FICTION

Fiesta in November, edited by Angel Flores and Dudley Poore. This is a colorful and interesting collection of short novels and stories from the various native literatures of Latin America.

3. WRITING

To vary the program of the usual source papers, the final unit of writing is devoted to experiments in literary criticism and some attempts at creative writing.

4. LIBRARY READING

Special attention is given to the recently prominent magazine, the *Inter-American* monthly, for its particularly good articles on the life and the attitudes of the people. Of the books recommended, students are asked to read certain parts of several books to gain as wide an acquaintance as possible with Latin America.

- Louis Adamic, *The House in Antigua*. A 300-year-old house in Guatemala, and the story of the place told through the house.
- Ciro Alegría, *Broad and Alien Is the World*. A story of the farmers' life and their becoming victims of a greedy rancher.
- Vicki Baum, *The Weeping Wood*. A novelist's conception of the story of Brazilian rubber, part fact and much fiction.
- Anita Brenner, *Idols behind Altars*. A study of the relation between native history, religion, and customs and the arts that express them.
- Alan Chase, *The Five Arrows*. An adventure story based on the Spanish brand of fascism, falange, of which Mr. Chase has made an extensive study.
- William R. Crawford, *A Century of Latin American Thought*. A diversified representation of writers and opinion; an excellent introduction to the serious thought of the other Americas.
- Euclides da Cunha, *Rebellion in the Backlands*. A Brazilian classic about a rebellion in the mountains and desert led by a fanatic minister and put down by the government.
- Gertrude Diamont, *Days of Ofelia*. A picture of Mexican life through the story of a lovable ten-year-old girl.
- Julian Duguid, *Green Hell*. One of the better travel books concerning the jungles of eastern Bolivia.
- José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi, *The Itching Parrot*. A picaresque novel, for a hundred years a best seller in Mexico, valuable for its picture of city life.
- José Hernández, *The Gaucho*. National epic of the Argentine about a character much like our cowboy; valuable for its graphic picture of his life.
- William Henry Hudson, *Far Away and Long Ago*. Pictures of the author's childhood in the Argentine.
- López y Fuentes, *El Indio*. A prize novel portraying village life among an Indian tribe in the mountains of Mexico.
- Mauricio Magdaleno, *Sunburst*. A tragic story of a very poor Mexican village deceived by a supposed savior into further peonage.
- Eduardo Mallea, *The Bay of Silence*. Required reading for those seeking to know modern Argentina.
- Ezequiel Padilla, *Free Men of America*. A compactly written history and a study of many of the freedom movements in Latin America.
- Ricardo Palma, *The Knights of the Cape*. Translations from *Tradiciones Peruanas*, sketches from the history of Peru at the time of the Conquest.
- Luis Quintanilla, *A Latin American Speaks*. A truthful, provocative account by a Mexican diplomat of the living conditions in Latin America.
- José Enrique Rodó, *Ariel*. A brilliant essay by a great Uruguayan about the spirit and ideal of democracy.
- William Seabrook, *The Magic Island*. About the jungles of Haiti, wild barbaric rites, and witchcraft.
- Hudson Strode, *Timeless Mexico*. A recognized new history and evaluation of the changes that have taken place within recent years.
- Hendrik van Loon, *Simon Bolívar*. As usual, a great deal of Van Loon, but a most agreeable means of getting acquainted with this great historical figure.
- Thornton Wilder, *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*. Set in Peru in the seventeenth century, a colorful portrayal of urban life as well as a very dramatic story.
- T. R. Ybarra, *Young Man of Caracas*. The first chapters are particularly good for the account of the author's boyhood in Venezuela.
- The Green Continent*, selected and edited by Germán Arciniegas. A collection of native literatures of various countries, most of them brief examples of essay, fiction, and poetic prose.
- Having worked this plan out with a selected group of students and having found that it has value in its larger units of concentration and in the vital contemporary worth of the material that was being read, we are repeating the course and have extended the enrolment. The basic idea, we believe, has much in its favor. Whether the books selected are the best for the purpose will become apparent in the repetition of the course, and it is to be expected that other books will come off the press which may fit into the scheme more profitably. The bibliographies, naturally, will change, deletions will be made, new books will be added, and many a classic now in print, omitted through our ignorance, will find its rightful place.

Current English Forum

Conducted by

THE NCTE COMMITTEE ON CURRENT ENGLISH USAGE

The End Preposition

THE story goes that the late Barrett Wendell, famous professor of rhetoric at Harvard, invariably got a laugh out of the alert members in his composition classes by remarking: "Gentlemen, the preposition is a very poor word to end a sentence with." This admonition, though not always put with such paradoxical neatness, has been passed along to students for more than two hundred years and has generally been accepted on faith.

It is high time now to challenge this dictum, as some careful scholars in the field of grammar have already done. The superstition—it really is nothing more than that—was largely established by the laborious efforts of John Dryden, the "father of modern prose," who attempted to make English conform to the Latin models. Even Dryden, the great Latin scholar and translator, deliberately went through the Prefaces of his first editions, recasting his sentences to make them conform to the Latin. Historically, from the Old English period to the present, some sentences have ended with prepositions. One finds in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, for the year 1016, "Sē herehim flēah beforan," literally, "The army him fled before." In Old English the inflectional endings made the separation of preposition and object possible, a construction which has persisted despite the grammarians of the last two centuries, who have repeated the warning against the prepositional ending.

From the time of the Old English period, prepositions have greatly increased in number and express many complicated relationships not found in the old idiom. Those who insist that final prepositions are inelegant

are taking from the English language one of its greatest assets—its flexibility—an advantage realized and practiced by all our greatest writers except a few who, like Dryden and Gibbon, tried to fashion the English language after the Latin. One may quickly get an idea of the extensive use of the final preposition by turning to H. W. Fowler's discussion of this matter in his *Dictionary of Modern English Usage*,¹ where he cites a large number of examples, including Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Jonson, Bacon, the Bible, Milton, Pepys, Congreve, Swift, Defoe, Burke, Cowper, Lamb, Hazlitt, De Quincey, Landor, Ruskin, Mill, Thackeray, Arnold, Lowell, and Kipling. After this array of quotations from our great writers, his parting advice is:

Follow no arbitrary rule, but remember that there are often two or more possible arrangements between which a choice should be consciously made; if the abnormal, or at least unorthodox, final preposition that has naturally presented itself sounds comfortable, keep it; if it does not sound comfortable, still keep it if it has compensating vigour, or when among awkward possibilities it is the least awkward.

As a general rule, the preposition does stand before the word it governs, as in "The book is on the table," but not always. For example, we say, "It was the letter *that* we were laughing *about*," in which the logical order of the adjective clause is "*we were laughing about that*" (*that* is a relative pronoun with the antecedent *letter*). Also in

¹ (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1926), pp. 457-59; see also E. Kuusinga, *A Handbook of Present-Day English*, Part II: "English Accidence and Syntax," pp. i and iii (5th ed.; Groningen: P. Noordhoff, 1931).

questions it is common practice to separate the preposition from its object. One says: "What are you searching for?" instead of "For what are you searching?" "Whom did he ask about?" instead of "About whom did he ask?" "Which did Jane speak of?" instead of "Of which did Jane speak?" Unless the speaker or writer is very careful and conceives the complete sentence beforehand, he will follow the general practice of beginning a question with an interrogative word and a relative clause with a relative pronoun.

Poutsma points out that one way of giving prominence to an idea in the mind of the speaker or writer is to mention it first thing in the sentence and that the bursting of the idea on the mind of the hearer will often secure as much attention as holding him in suspense until the end of what is to be said. He thus accounts for the preposition at the end of many interrogative and exclamatory sentences, such as "What are you looking at?" and "What a state you are in!"² C. T. Onions shows that the same situation holds in declarative sentences where the idea which is uppermost in the speaker's mind is mentioned first, as in "The binding of the book it is impossible to speak too highly of."³

Jespersen calls to our attention the fact that a speaker in the beginning may not have made up his mind which of two or three synonymous expressions he is going to use: *longs for* or *desires (wants)*, *is possessed of* or *possesses*, and that if he chooses a prepositional phrase, the result naturally is the placing of the preposition last. He cites a number of illustrations, one of which from Stevenson's *The Art of Writing* (1905) will suffice: "A reflection exceedingly just in itself but which, as the sequel shows, I failed to profit by" (= "turn to account").⁴

² H. Poutsma, *A Grammar of Late Modern English*, Part I: "The Sentence," first half: "The Elements of the Sentence" (2d ed.; Groningen: P. Noordhoff, 1928), pp. 387 and 479.

³ *An Advanced English Syntax* (4th ed.; London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1927), § 112a.

⁴ *A Modern English Grammar*, Vol. II, Part III: "Syntax" (Heidelberg: Carl Winters Universitätsbuchhandlung), chap. xiii, p. 186, § 10.24.

If the relative is omitted, as it often is in informal English, the preposition is necessary at the end. Sentences like "There's the paper you were looking for" are fairly common in Modern English. Here *paper* has a double function in the sentence, serving as the preposition object and at the same time as the subject of the independent clause, "there's the paper."

Similarly, the end position of the preposition is practically unavoidable in substantive clauses, such as "He received what we had agree upon." Unless the analytic equivalent *that* which is substituted for the independent relative *what*, the preposition must remain at the end. If the substitution is made, the sentence may then read: "He received that upon which we had agreed."

Another type of construction in which the preposition is necessary at the end is one in which a clause is used as the object of a preposition, as in Dickens' "He never raised his eyes from what he was about,"⁵ where the clause *what he was about* is object of the preposition *from*; and in Galsworthy's "Nothing would ever turn him from acquisition of what he had set his heart on,"⁶ where *what he had set his heart on* is object of *from*.

Many more types of sentences may be cited in which the end preposition is desirable or necessary, but enough examples have been given to show that a preposition at the end of a sentence should not be dreaded and avoided. A preposition at the end of a sentence is pardonable—in fact, is good usage; but awkward, unnatural combinations, often brought about by trying to avoid what is thought to be a fault in grammar or style, are unforgivable. As Fowler says, the writer who is guilty of such practices is "out of the frying pan into the fire."⁷

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⁵ *David Copperfield* (see Jespersen, *op. cit.*, pp. 187–88).

⁶ *Caravan* (cited in Jespersen, *op. cit.*).

⁷ *Op. cit.*, "Out of the Frying Pan," p. 416.

Report and Summary

About Literature, Films, and Radio

THE DISTINGUISHED GREEK POET, playwright, and Nobel prize candidate, Nikos Kazantzaki, with much of the same directness which characterized his literary ancestors in a crisis of civilization several millenniums ago, has projected seven questions to which he believes all thinking persons the world over must apply themselves. In his "The Immortal Free Spirit of Man," which appears in the September British *Life and Letters Today*, he sounds a rally cry to all intellectuals of good will, of every country, to get together, to become acquainted with one another, and to work together for the purpose of helping to achieve balance and harmony between the intellectual and moral development of man. "For the greatest peril in our post-war world," he says, "is the fact that the mind of contemporary man has developed far more rapidly than his soul." The questions he would have each one of us think through are:

1. Do you think that we are living at the end of a historical period, or at the beginning of a new one?
2. Can literature and art or theoretical thinking influence the present movement of history, or do they simply mirror existing conditions?
3. If you believe that thought and art do influence reality, in which direction do you think that it ought to guide the spiritual development of your country?
4. What do you think is the positive contribution that thought and art can offer the world?
5. How much contact is there between intellectuals and the great masses of the people? And what could be done to broaden the basis of that contact?
6. What today is the primary duty of an intellectual? of an artist? How could he contribute to the peaceful co-operation of all peoples?
7. Would it be practicable to establish an *Internationale* of the spirit?

AN AFFIRMATIVE ANSWER TO THE second question is implicit in the article by James M. Minifie, "At an Alarming Rate" in the *Saturday Review of Literature* (October 19). Minifie describes the work of the Psychological Warfare Branch of the Anglo-American Fifteenth Army group in Italy and its successor, Information Services Branch of the United States Forces, Austria. P.W.B. was formed to conduct a psychological war against the enemy, he writes, "but it was soon found that a vital part of its functions was reeducating the peoples of liberated lands. This activity increased in importance as the liberated areas grew larger. Its instruments included press, radio, movies, the theatre, propaganda shops, and display centers." He gives many illustrations to show that, although the rampant individualism of the Italians makes it difficult for them to accept either teaching or guidance, the Austrians "can assimilate guidance and new ideas, make them their own, and in turn disseminate them." It is his opinion that the Austrians, the Danubians, and the Balkans, "want to look west, not east. They want to forget the east and all that came out of it." He concludes: "We sold something more than paper. We sold ideas. We sold them to the greatest natural propagandists on the Continent, the Viennese. They'll carry on if you give them backing. But let us hurry. They are hungry. Counterpressures are great. And time, too, is passing—at an alarming rate."

"THE DRAMATIC ART OF TERESA DEEVY" by Temple Lane in the autumn *Dublin Magazine* describes the work of a

young Irish playwright who is little known in America, although her plays have been very successfully produced at the Abbey Theatre. They include *Reapers*, *Katie Roche*, *The Wild Goose*, *The King of Spain's Daughter*, and *The Disciple*. The Deevy plays, it appears, evade label. They are not of the imaginative, dream type such as Yeats's, nor are they staunchly realistic as are O'Casey's. Through all of them, however, a pattern runs. "They are studies of men and women out of tune with circumstances, who attempt reconciliation by every means, generally by taking refuge in fantasy. They are not all gentleness! There are startling explosions of physical violence. . . . On the whole, however, the conflict is in the mind; only external symptoms are seen." In these days when Burgess Meredith's revival of *The Playboy of the Western World* is causing the press to reminisce over the stormy receptions that play received, it is interesting to note that Dublin seems to have accepted with equanimity Miss Deevy's *Disciple*, parts of which certainly recall *The Playboy*. For example, its heroine, Ellie, like Pegeen, seeks heroism. When she finds it in an unpleasing gunman, Jack the Scalp, her threat to follow her hero over the world affronts and terrifies him. Says he: "Yah, maybe I murdered an odd man or so, but murder'll leave a man his respect. . . . I'm willing ever to risk my life clean, but . . . I'm a respectable man."

"AMERICAN LITERATURE IN RUSSIA" is a pertinent historical essay by Robert Magidoff in the *Saturday Review of Literature* (November 2). It is pertinent because to those of us who are concerned about the inability of the average American to get behind the iron curtain to the mind of the average Russian, and vice versa, this gives us a clue at least as to what is molding the average Russian's ideas about Americans. Magidoff reports that forty million copies of nearly one thousand books by 201 American writers and poets have been published in Russia since 1917. (Millions were also published in czarist Russia.) Jack London is

responsible for over ten million, Mark Twain for three, Upton Sinclair for almost three, with Ernest Seton Thompson, O. Henry, and Bret Harte coming next. Sinclair Lewis, Dreiser, John Dos Passos, Langston Hughes, Erskine Caldwell, John Steinbeck, and Richard Wright are also widely read. Ernest Hemingway is at present "the most eagerly read and most passionately argued contemporary foreign author." Magidoff makes the interesting observation that he has become firmly convinced that what the Russians see in these contemporary writers is "least of all a condemnation of America or of human nature. Strange as it may seem to many Americans, the Russians find in these works the humanism and passionate honesty, the suffering, and the quest they have been used to finding in the books of their own best writers."

WHAT THE RUSSIANS THINK OF American and other films is disclosed in a recent *U.S.S.R. Information Bulletin*, which is published weekly by the Russian Embassy in Washington. In the issue of October 23, an account is given of the International Cinema Festival held not long ago at Cannes, France. Twenty countries participated. Eight prizes went to Soviet entrants. Poltoratsky, in reporting the event for the *Bulletin*, observes: "The majority of non-Soviet films which were shown in Cannes were devoted to the decadence of the human mind. Drug addiction, dipsomania and mysticism under the guise of psychology—such was their essence. . . . A direct contrast is supplied by the Soviet films, which emanate vitality, faith in the future, and the struggle for it." The same bulletin has an article on Moscow University, founded two centuries ago, which currently has seven thousand students, representing thirty-three nationalities. The photographic illustrations might be of any coeducational American university, picturing, as they do, students registering and the academic interests of war veterans.

BRITISH FILM-MAKERS ARE AMUSINGLY taken to task by W. Cabell Greet in his "English Spoken Here and There" in the November *Harper's*. Greet by no means advocates that British actors and actresses speak American. All he asks them to do is to speak clearly and intelligibly. Otherwise, if Americans are to understand British films, we shall have to undergo the horrible linguistic process of learning "British hobble-gobble."

"DO AMERICANS SPEAK ENGLISH?" was the subject of a radio debate held recently between Louis Untermeyer, poet and critic, and C. V. R. Thompson, British writer. This is reprinted in the October *Talks*. Untermeyer thinks that we speak a hybrid: We have not yet discarded English, but neither have we fully accepted American. He predicts that American will be the language—the international language—and English will become the dialect. Thompson believes that we speak English—but a dated English. In his opinion, the speech of the average American would be more intelligible to a reincarnated Elizabethan than would the speech of a London drawing-room, partly because modern English is more streamlined than American and partly because we have kept in current usage a more Elizabethan vocabulary. Well, maybe. Anyway, if you do not know *Talks*, get hold of a copy, and see if you will not find it useful. This quarterly digest of the most important addresses presented over the Columbia network should be especially helpful to teachers of "communication" courses. Address: Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc., 485 Madison Avenue, New York 22.

"THE MYTHOLOGY OF BROADCASTING" by Eleanor E. Timberg in the autumn

Antioch Review should be read by every person interested in communications. Mrs. Timberg takes each of the most generally accepted myths and by documentary evidence and analysis completely disproves them. These erroneous beliefs are: "American Radio Is Free Radio"; "The Public Determines What Programs It Wants To Hear"; "The Public Gets Its Programs Free by Permitting Advertising"; "The Air Belongs to the People"; "In FM Lies the Cure of Radio's Ill." Her prediction is that broadcasting will remain in the kindergarten class unless civic interest, indignation, and participation decide otherwise.

THE NEW QUARTERLY OF POETRY has been established by the League To Support Poetry, 327 West Eighteenth Street, New York 11. A dollar and a half a year. In the first number, published this fall, the editors, of whom Gerard Previn Meyer is editor-in-chief, make this pronouncement: "Poetry of late has been too much talked about, not given enough chance to speak for itself. In the *New Quarterly of Poetry*, the League To Support Poetry offers poets of whatever school—or of no school—an additional medium of expression. The only requirement is that the poetry be alive. We hope to keep the title a reality."

The *New University* is a new British quarterly which will deal with problems prevalent in universities, not only in Britain, but in the United States and other countries. Sir Ernest Simon, chairman of the Council of Manchester College, will be chairman of the editorial board. He will be assisted by a group of educators representing other British universities. Each issue will carry about eight articles and also notes, correspondence, and reviews. The first issue, due out in November, has not yet reached us.

About Education

"THE COLLEGE TEACHING OF ENGLISH," a selective bibliography of articles, pamphlets, and books dealing with aims and teaching procedures (1941-44), is now avail-

able. It was prepared by Dr. Edna Hays of Pine Manor Junior College and will be supplemented annually by the NCTE's Committee on Bibliography, College Sec-

tion. Listed are 347 items, each carefully annotated and summarized. This bibliography has been compiled in the hope that it may prove useful in indicating trends and calling attention to pressing problems. Items are entered under the following categories: The English Program; Articulation between High School and College; Freshman Composition; Reading; Remedial Reading; Language; Literature; Literary Scholarship; Humanities; Communication and the Communication Arts; Speech; Journalism; English in Engineering Education; English in Wartime; Preparation of the High-School English Teacher in the Liberal Arts College. A handy reference guide. Fifty cents. Address: NCTE Office: 211 West Sixty-eighth Street, Chicago 21.

IF THE LIVES OF GREAT MEN DO inspire, then the morale of any teacher should be brightened by a reading of "President Neilson of Smith" by Mrs. Dwight Whitney Morrow, in the November *Atlantic*, and "Neilson of Smith" by Marjorie Hope Nicolson, in the autumn *American Scholar*. The same is also true for many of the editorial tributes to the late William Chandler Bagley, such as that in the November N.E.A. *Journal*. During the past few months there has hardly been a paper or periodical in the country which has not devoted a column or more to the work of these two educators, and the striking thing about most of these has been that the wit and vigor of these two men in life, in death, perforce, have turned necrology to lively essays. No one was ever in doubt as to where either man stood. Their intellectual honesty rang clear and loud. The warmth of their humanity caused them to carry their lances high in many fields. They wore their great learning lightly and taught their students to do likewise. Each had a sense of humor, of quite different kinds, but humor and interest in the individual characterized their approach to many serious problems of education. Only a person with a sense of humor can carry a battle for fifty years, and only a person who loves individuals can keep faith in humanity (Swift, notwithstanding).

As Mrs. Morrow writes of Mr. Neilson, and it is equally true of Mr. Bagley: "He had a passionate faith in education which glowed throughout his life. To him it was part of the eternal struggle for freedom of the human soul and he battled for it on many fields." Just reading the articles mentioned cannot help but renew your own faith in the progress of education.

THE FALL BOOK NUMBER OF THE *Saturday Review of Literature* is that of October 12. *Inter alia*, you will find interesting Howard Mumford Jones's "Fifty Guides to American Civilization." This is an annotated list of ten European books and forty American which Professor Jones drew up at the request of a Chinese scholar, apparently in the interest of intercultural education.

A COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION was appointed by President Truman last July. The problem areas which the commission will first examine, according to George F. Zook, its chairman, will be: (1) the responsibilities of higher education in our democracy and in international affairs; (2) ways and means of providing higher educational opportunity to all in terms of the needs of the individual and of the nation; (3) the organization and expansion of higher education; (4) financing higher education; and (5) providing personnel for higher education. Letters have been sent to national organizations in higher education asking them for their suggestions as to areas in which the Commission should engage. It is hoped that through close co-operation between educational organizations and institutions of higher learning, on the one hand, and with government agencies, on the other, the work of the Commission may be fruitful in the future development of higher education.

A PLAN FOR A PACIFIC NORTHWEST university which would pool the educational resources for higher education in Idaho, Montana, Washington, and Oregon has been suggested and is being urged by

Professor H. G. Merriam, chairman of the department of humanities, University of Montana.

SELECTED TITLES FROM THE archives of American folk song are listed in a catalogue by, and the records can be purchased from, the Recording Laboratory, Division of Music, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

THE PEAK OF VETERAN ENROLMENT, the American Council of Education reports, will be during the academic year 1949-50, with each year in between increasing the demand for work in the next highest year.

THE CARNEGIE FOUNDATION FOR the Advancement of Teaching announces that a special committee of college presidents and other educators has made a unanimous recommendation that the College Entrance Examination Board and other nonprofit testing agencies join in forming a single Cooperative Educational Testing Commission.

NOTES ON INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION:

We go to press on the eve of the first meeting of the General Conference of UNESCO in Paris. At that conference each member-country will be represented by not more than five delegates. The conference will approve a program of activities for UNESCO and will elect a director-general who will be responsible for the appointment of the secretariat.

Under the Fulbright Bill passed by the last Congress, the Department of State is authorized to use proceeds from sale abroad

of surplus property for exchange of students and other educational projects. The bill provides up to twenty million dollars for educational exchanges with any country which buys surplus property, the sum spent in any one country not to exceed one million dollars a year. A Board of Foreign Scholarships will select candidates in conjunction with the State Department. Veterans are to be given preference.

The Institute of International Education reports that for the first time since the war a number of American students are studying during the academic year 1946-47 in some of the European countries under the Institute's Student Exchange program. France, Czechoslovakia, Switzerland, and Italy are the countries with which the exchanges have taken place.

The China Institute in America recently announced the establishment of ten scholarships for American veterans who served in China during the war to follow courses in American universities fostering a better understanding between China and the United States.

A Commission for International Education Reconstruction has been formed under the guidance of the American Council on Education. The Commission is not an operating agency. It works entirely for and through established agencies concerned with educational reconstruction. Its purpose is "to give direction to the many scattering efforts on behalf of educational rehabilitation." Officers are: T. G. Pullen, Jr., chairman, National Council of Chief State School Officers; A. J. Brumbaugh, vice-president, American Council on Education; Harold E. Snyder, executive secretary; Robert Stanforth, associate secretary. Address: 744 Jackson Place, N.W., Washington 6, D.C.

Books

LEARNING BASIC ENGLISH¹

Basic English is a simplified form of the English language designed by C. K. Ogden, taught by I. A. Richards, and approved by Winston Churchill. Intended primarily as an international second-language for worldwide use, it is also presented as an invaluable instrument for the interpretation of thought and semantic analysis.

A number of volumes such as *The System of Basic English*, *The Basic Words*, and *Basic English and Its Uses* have already been written in exposition of this simplified language, which its disciples call "Basic," while others such as *Learning the English Language*, *The Basic Way to Learn English*, and *Basic Step by Step* have been devised as teaching aids, especially for those to whom English is a foreign tongue. *Learning Basic English* is now presented as "A Practical Handbook for English-Speaking People" who wish to master Basic English.

Actually, *Learning Basic English* is something more than this, and this something more gives the book a curiously uneven quality. In addition to constructing a handbook, the authors have written a polemic defense of Basic English and have so inter-fused the two that the reader cannot read the defense without studying the handbook and cannot study the handbook without reading the defense.

The handbook is excellent. It explains the system clearly and in sufficient detail for the practical purposes of the learner; and it presents exercises well designed to help an English-speaking reader acquire skill in using Basic English.

The defense is artful and in most of its points quite sound. It is, nevertheless, so full of special pleading and frequently so

pettish and arrogant as to be of questionable value for the student of language. As the authors recognize, there is something "provocative as well as provoking" about translations into Basic English. There is also something both provocative and provoking in the defensive attitude of the authors in *Learning Basic English*. This unfortunate quality arises, I think, from a dangerous combination of scholarly objectivity and snake-oil salesmanship. In one sentence, the authors examine Basic English with keen intellectual analysis; and then with a turn of phrase they sell it with all the objectivity of a radio announcer recommending "Old Golds." They also act as defenders of a faith. They do not wish to "seem to hand" weapons to "enemies of Basic." They wave aside contemptuously questions which annoy them, such as the question concerning the relationship between Basic English and cultural imperialism. This question, however it may be answered, rises logically enough from the close relationship between language and its social assumptions, as well as from the decision of His Majesty's Government, according to the Prime Minister's Statement on Basic English, March 9, 1944 (quoted on pp. 86-87), to encourage the teaching of Basic English in the British colonies and in foreign countries. But the authors ridicule it as merely "vociferous cries—not from these countries, but from sensitive souls in New York or London—of 'Cultural Imperialism!'" (As a serious parallel, they call attention to the evils caused by the introduction of the cigarette habit in China and actually remark on page 11, "Nobody's fault, maybe—but the cigarette habit came into China through English-speaking people's enterprise! You never heard any cry go up about cultural or economic imperialism!") They say of the notion that Basic English is intended to replace

¹ I. A. Richards and Christine Gibson, *Learning Basic English*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1945. Pp. 116.

French or Spanish as a first language in some countries, "It isn't salt, it's vitriol that should be put on the tail of that absurd proposal."

It is a pity that the authors have seen fit to embellish their "practical handbook" with this sort of rhetoric, for there are values in the study of Basic English which serious students of English should have an opportunity to gain without being subjected to the impression that Basic English is a new evangelical cult.

THOMAS CLARK POLLOCK

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

A FOREWORD TO LITERATURE

It is not an easy matter to get a syllabus of English literature, a classroom full of first-year collegians, and a good teacher into a single book. Professor Ernest Earnest of Temple University has very nearly performed this trick, or at least has achieved the illusion of having done so. His *Foreword to Literature*¹ is one of those wise, well-tempered books which make us remember that our business as teachers of literature is to teach literature, and that that very business is one of the main concerns of our day and generation.

In the first sentence of his Preface the author states disarmingly that new truths or new points of view are not his subject. He is interested in getting at the fundamentals of literary criticism. It is evident that he is an impressionist, holding with La Bruyère that a book is to be judged by the effect it has had on the sensibilities of men who read it. It does not count for literature if it serves as grist for the fine, hard mills of the scholastics. These gentry Professor Earnest thinks are poisoners of learning: "Milton's poems are presented as a kind of Herculaneum of classical remains. Parallel passages are traced until the student is led to believe that poems are a kind of mosaic work. Texts are carefully revised to restore

¹ Ernest Earnest, *A Foreword to Literature*. New York and London: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1945. Pp. vii+332. \$1.50.

every misspelling and obsolete capitalization of the original. The question of dating a poem becomes more important than the idea it contains. Enough man-hours to build Boulder Dam are expended in exhuming forgotten minor works of third-rate poets. Literature becomes a pseudo-science" (pp. 15-16).

It should not be imagined, however, that the author of this *Foreword* devotes his time merely to genial chat about his own feelings and choices in literature. Throughout his book there is evidence of a sincere quest for sound, objective measurements.

After an introductory chapter, "The Nature of Literature," follow three dealing with poetry—its nature, its form and function, and its interpretation. Chapter v takes up prose style; chapter vi, fiction; chapter vii, drama. After these type studies comes a chapter on humor which sets cheek by jowl some writers not often seen in each other's company. Chapter ix, "Originality and Convention," which leans heavily on J. L. Lowes, and chapter x, "Restraint," were to me the most satisfying portions of the book. They lead naturally into the closing and crowning chapter, "Sincerity and Propaganda," where the fact of the everlasting power of the printed word is once again made clear as a trumpet. The text closes with thirty-five pages of carefully designed exercises intended to be used in connection with a number of anthologies mentioned. There is an unavoidable looseness in a tie-up of this kind; and, worse, the present shortage of texts makes it extremely unlikely that the eight anthologies recommended will ever get into the hands of the teachers and students who use this *Foreword*. Professor Earnest should set about preparing his own anthology.

The *Foreword to Literature* reads brightly. The author's style carries him with a brisk sureness over many areas where another critic might have lapsed into comfortable dulness. In the makeup of the book eye-appeal was not forgotten: the pages are not crowded, and numbered paragraph heads

printed in italic type give the open effect of an outline.

There was only one notable lapse in the printing: on page 165 in a single line occur two misspelled names. As the names belong to two famous Irishmen, perhaps this oversight is a record of some kind or other.

TOM BURNS HABER

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SHAKESPEARE'S HISTORY PLAYS

E. M. W. Tillyard's *Shakespeare's History Plays*¹ describes the general conception of order prevalent among the educated men of Shakespeare's day; the more special Tudor conceptions of history and politics which Tillyard conjectures Shakespeare must have known through the church homilies, the *Mirror for Magistrates*, and certain chronicles, in particular Hall's; and Shakespeare's two historical tetralogies in reference to the foregoing concepts.

The first one hundred and twenty-six pages of this scholarly treatise are especially valuable to the average teacher of Shakespeare for their analysis and synthesis of the chroniclers (Tito Livio, Hardying, Polydore Vergil, Sir Thomas More, Hall, and Holinshed) and for suggestions of their influence on Shakespeare's historical and political thought.

The rest of the work is concerned with Shakespeare's two historical tetralogies. Tillyard's principal theses are these: (1) Shakespeare was an educated man; his uses of the conceptions of world order, degree, and the processes of history ally him with the educated class; Shakespeare was among the select few who saw in history from Richard II to Henry VII an organic pattern, a concatenation of events, issuing from the murder of Woodstock and based on the justice of God punishing and working out the effects of a crime until prosperity is re-established in the Tudor monarchy. (2) In so treating history philosophically, Shake-

speare's main and first debt is to the chronicler Hall. (3) For his ideas on history Shakespeare was little indebted to the chronicle plays; on the contrary, Shakespeare was mainly responsible for giving the chronicle plays any superior thoughtfulness or sophistication they may contain. (4) The morality play is very important in shaping Shakespeare's history plays in that it prompted their central theme, that of England as Respublica put in a solemn and highly moral setting. (5) The protagonist of the first tetralogy is Respublica, or England. (6) The second tetralogy gives Shakespeare's epic picture of medieval and of contemporary England.

Through his application of the historical method of criticism, Tillyard integrates the plays with Elizabethan thought. He suggests to the reader what Shakespeare's history plays probably meant to educated Elizabethans and so fixes them understandably in the framework of their own times. Although for the research specialist some of the material may seem commonplace, much of it is informative.

Tillyard's method is, however, assumptive as well as historical. He makes wide use of conjecture and probability in the absence of direct evidence connecting Shakespeare with the body of historical thought in the chronicles. Consequently, he has turned up little new in the way of concrete, verifiable evidence. Often, too, he is impressionistic, and some readers will find it difficult to accept his interpretations, especially in regard to *Henry V*.

His analysis of the plays themselves is less interesting than his presentation of backgrounds and influences. His exposition is often too directed toward his specialized theses—in reference to style, technique, and historical concepts—to be useful to the average teacher of Shakespeare. It again illustrates the fact that Shakespeare understood the art of writing plays much better than do his critics.

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¹ New York: Macmillan Co., 1946. Pp. 336.

WHAT UNDERSTANDING DRAMA DOES¹

How good is a textbook? As good as the material which it presents? As good as the questions it asks? As good as the teacher who uses it? *Understanding Drama* by Cleanth Brooks and Robert B. Heilman suggests these questions and, in a way, answers them.

It certainly presents good material: *Lady Windermere's Fan*, *Everyman*, *The Menaechmi*, *The London Merchant*, *The School for Scandal*, *Rosmersholm*, *Henry IV, Part I*, and *The Way of the World*. It asks exhaustive critical questions about these works and makes full use of the similarities and differences which they afford. Even more important, perhaps, are the comments of the authors which afford examples of straightforward critical thinking. While it may be held that they are sometimes guilty of special pleading, particularly in the cases of *Henry IV* and *The Way of the World*, what they have to say is always an admirable example of the way to proceed with thought.

The considerations and the questions asked, however, are primarily literary. And literary questions are not the first nor the last questions to ask about a play, and what, in the end, the teacher is provided with, is an extensive and intelligent *middle*. What the teacher would have perforce to provide would be the beginning and the end if, as the authors claim, the student were to understand the drama. The authors would certainly serve as efficient guides when the student is asked to consider for himself Bonamy Dobrée's theory (p. 451) that in the "relationship between Fainall and Marwood Con-

greve moves toward the Tragic." There is nothing to guide him, however, or even to ask him to consider just what stage business is involved in the tavern "council" scene in *Henry IV*. After three hundred and fifty years of commentary, Falstaff's belly still looms larger than his speech on honor and is more important to the beholder than the question of whether or not the man who is wit in himself and the cause of wit in others is a coward. In the face of these three hundred and fifty years it is difficult to remember that, when at last Falstaff is reported to have babbled of green fields, it is the "sad gut" and not his intellectuality nor his function in the plot which really and very truly matters. The nervous tension of the contract scene in *The Way of the World* must, in the end, be the responsibility of the actors, and the suspense in *Lady Windermere* is not so much a matter of what is said as of the fashion in which the actress communicates to the audience that her knuckles are white as she grips the fan.

It is quite true that the kind of question which Mr. Brooks and Mr. Heilman ask is the kind of question to which an actor would want very much to know the answers, but students do not have the special intelligence of actors and are not faced with the necessity of translating such answers into dramatic action. A play read is not a play seen—seen through the understanding, ingenuity, and creative ability of the people involved in its presentation from the director down. In the classroom the job of synthesis, the creative job, is the teacher's, and for this even so complete a book as *Understanding Drama* is no substitute.

JOHN STEWART CARTER

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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

¹ Cleanth Brooks and Robert B. Heilman, *Understanding Drama*. New York: Henry Holt, 1945. Pp. 515. \$2.25.

In Brief Review

[Mention under this head does not preclude review elsewhere.]

FOR THE GENERAL READER

B. F.'s Daughter. By JOHN P. MARQUAND. Little, Brown. Pp. 439. \$2.75.

Polly Fulton, poor little rich girl, is the daughter of a driving, dominating, self-made man. Polly is much like her father but has little opportunity to drive. Written in the present with shifting time sequence. Nearly thirty years are covered—covered very cleverly. Park Avenue and official stuffed shirts are targets for satire. There are social and political implications. Marquand says his purpose in writing the story was to portray the spirit and values of the times through which we have so recently passed.

East River. By SHOLEM ASCH. Putnam. \$3.00.

This is the story of immigrants and their children who lived near the East River in New York in a certain block (a slum) on Forty-eighth Street. Many were Jewish; but there were Catholics, atheists, Gentiles, and the poor of many nationalities. Some are men and women and children of great dignity and rich perceptions of values. One chapter on neighborliness and community living is especially fine. It will appeal to most readers.

King Jesus. By ROBERT GRAVES. Creative Age. \$3.00.

Mr. Graves has retold the life of Jesus and his times in a manner that will displease many readers. Miracles, the supernatural, and pagan rites are not wanting, but the Virgin Birth is rejected. The brilliance of the writing, the learning and competence of the author, and the wealth of historical detail are impressive.

Holdfast Gaines. By ODELL SHEPARD and WILLARD SHEPARD. Macmillan. Pp. 647. \$3.00.

Holdfast Gaines was an Indian and foster-son of a white couple. His tribe was massacred, but, in spite of his love for his people, he remained true to the whites. The saga covers the eastern seaboard from Connecticut to New Orleans. A factual, well-planned, detailed, historical novel. End maps.

Toil of the Brave. By INGLIS FLETCHER. Bobbs-Merrill. Pp. 547. \$3.00.

By the author of *Raleigh's Eden*. A novel of the Revolution, laid in North Carolina. Conspiracies, spies, British agents, and indifference are stressed. There are many noble characters, plenty of action, and a love interest.

New Orleans Woman: The Biographical Novel of Myra Clark Gaines. By HARNETT KANE. Doubleday. \$2.75.

Fictionized biography. Myra found after she was grown that she was a daughter of rich—very rich—man now dead. She was his legal heir. For more than a half-century she fought a court battle for her rights, which included half of New Orleans. Her story has a certain fascination.

The River. By RUMER GODDEN. Little, Brown. \$2.00.

Through the garden of an English family, living in Bengal, a river flows. In mood and atmosphere the people (especially one little girl) and the river harmonize. Written with the author's usual charm.

Return to Jalna. By MAZO DE LA ROCHE. Atlantic-Little, Brown. \$2.75.

A tenth book about the Whiteoaks family. The men have returned from the war and are facing old responsibilities and some new ones.

The Happy Profession. By ELLERY SEDGWICK. Atlantic-Little, Brown. \$3.50.

Mr. Sedgwick's profession has been that of editing the *Atlantic Monthly*. He has known many famous people and also some less famous but just as interesting. "To be endlessly interested," Mr. Sedgwick said many years ago, "is one of the requisites of a good life." He has had a good life.

Hiroshima. By JOHN HERSEY. Knopf. \$1.75.

A short, graphic, detailed account of the bombing of Hiroshima. Great interest has already been aroused by this on-the-scene description, as printed in the *New Yorker* and *Herald-Tribune*, and by its radio presentation.

Uneasy Spring. By ROBERT MOLLOY. Macmillan. \$2.75.

By the author of *Pride's Way*. Edward Stafford, forty-six, a widower with two children, was faced with a problem: Should he marry a woman his own age or revive his youth by marrying a young girl?

Raffles of Singapore: A Biography. By EMILY HAHN. Doubleday. \$3.50.

The founder of Singapore, born in 1781, enjoyed years of adventure in the East India Company and became governor of several islands. Of particular interest is this history of the East India Company and British colonial policy.

The Tennessee, Vol. I: Old River—Frontier to Secession. By DONALD DAVIDSON. Rinehart. \$3.00.

The only two-volume book in the "Rivers of America Series." (A second volume will continue the history to the present.) The first is about the early

traders, river pirates, exploited Indians, and the Natchez Truce.

Under the Red Sea Sun. By EDWARD ELLSBERG. Dodd, Mead. \$3.50.

A story of courage, with suspense, drama, and grim humor. Commander Ellsberg, too old for the Navy, was assigned to the reclamation of a naval base on the Red Sea. He did a magnificent job—almost with bare hands. A stimulating book.

My San Francisco: A Wayward Biography. By GERTRUDE ATHERTON. Bobbs-Merrill. \$3.50.

Mrs. Atherton was born in San Francisco and has spent most of her life there. There is little omitted in her chronicle of events, phases of life, and interesting people. Illustrated.

The Thresher. By HERBERT KRAUSE. Bobbs-Merrill. \$3.00.

A drama of one man's conflict in a changing world. A well-written story of the wheat-growers of Minnesota, vivid and authentic in setting.

That Hagen Girl. By EDITH ROBERTS. Doubleday. \$2.50.

What small town gossip can do. Suspense—drama. Was the Hagen girl illegitimate?

Mink, Mary and Me: The Story of a Wilderness Trapline. By C. J. FERGUSON. Mill. \$3.50.

A story of the Canadian North Woods, fascinating in detail. Never a dull moment for the armchair traveler who likes shared experiences.

More Adventures with David Grayson. By DAVID GRAYSON. Doubleday. \$2.75.

Adventures in Understanding, Great Possessions, and Adventures in Solitude in one volume.

As We Were: Family Life in America, 1850-1900. By BELLAMY PARTRIDGE and OTTO BETTMANN. Whittlesey. \$4.50.

Five hundred illustrations from the Bettmann collection of old prints. A commentary by the author of *Country Lawyer* shows the growth of America through the way we were and the way we lievd.

Green Grass of Wyoming. By MARY O'HARA. Lippincott. Pp. 319. \$2.75.

By the author of *My Friend Flicka* and *Thunderhead*. Thunderhead has found a way out of his valley, and both he and his young master discover romance. Readers who enjoy nature and horses will delight in this third volume of the Wyoming Goose Bar Ranch.

A Century of the Catholic Essay. Edited, with biographical notes, by RAPHAEL H. GROSS, C.P.S. Lippincott. Pp. 352. \$3.50.

Forty-six essays written by authors who have embraced the Catholic faith. Not all are concerned with religious matters. In "The Church and the Modern World" eminent Catholics discuss the present state of the Catholic church.

Confessions of a Story Writer. By PAUL GALlico. Knopf. \$3.75.

Here are twenty-four popular short stories by the author of *The Snow Goose*. Preceding each story is the story behind the story—or Gallico's reason for writing it. A unique book which should encourage young writers.

Happy the Land. By LOUISE DICKINSON RICH. Lippincott. Pp. 259. \$3.00.

By the author of *We Took to the Woods*. For twelve years the author has made her home in northwestern Maine, where there are thousands of acres of uninhabited woodland dotted with swamps, brooks, and lakes. Hers is a rich life, crowded with the adventures of simple living. End maps.

The Plays of Anton Chekhov. Illustrated Editions Co. Pp. 248.

"The Seagull," "The Cherry Orchard," "The Wedding," "On the High Road," "The Proposal," "The Anniversary," "The Bear," and "The Three Sisters."

Taken at the Flood: The Human Drama as Seen by Modern American Novelists. Collected and arranged by ANN WATKINS. Harper. Pp. 376. \$3.00.

There is a wide range of subject matter and of authors. All selections are excerpts from books, such as "A Boy's Reverie," from *The Web and the Rock*; "Wang Lung's Wedding Day," from *The Good Earth*; "The Breadline," from *A Bell for Adano*; "The Handbag," from *The Lost Week End*; "The Bordells," from *Sanctuary*. Exceptionally good. Introductory notes by the editor give added interest to her methods and her choice of material.

Mind at the End of Its Tether and The Happy Ending. By H. G. WELLS. Didier. \$2.50.

Wells's last two works in one volume. Expressing his conviction of man's self-destruction and our power to create a dream world to which we may escape.

Theatre Book of the Year, 1945-46. By GEORGE JEAN NATHAN. Knopf. \$3.50.

Fourth annual volume surveying the New York theater and its productions.

For This We Fought: Guide Lines to America's Future as Reported to the Twentieth Century Fund. By STUART CHASE. Twentieth Century Fund. Pp. 123. \$1.00.

Starting with what veterans think they want, Chase considers also what civilians want. He believes that we may yet attain the goal of an abundant

world which we set for ourselves during the war and discusses at some length four economic "models" under which America may attain her ideals.

Christmas Tales for Reading Aloud. Compiled and adapted by ROBERT LOHAN. Stephen Daye Press. Pp. 296. \$3.75.

A choice collection of great stories and poems especially suitable for reading aloud. The average reading time of each story is fifteen minutes.

Blue Angels and Whales. By ROBERT GIBBINGS. Dutton. \$3.00.

The author of *Lovely Is the Lee* has written of his experiences in which he donned a diving helmet and explored the deep waters of the coral reefs in Bermuda and the Red Sea. The beautiful, the freakish, and the rare appear in fascinating pictures.

Accent Anthology. Edited by KERKER QUINN and CHARLES SHATTUCK. Harcourt. Pp. 687. \$4.00.

A collection of choice essays, short stories, and poems published in the magazine *Accent* during the first five years of its existence.

Man, an Autobiography. By GEORGE R. STEWART. Random. Pp. 310. \$2.75.

By the author of *Storm* and *Names on the Land*. "I, Man" begins his life-story by stating his dissatisfaction with the histories which have been written about him. Beginning with primitive mammal, Stewart traces the struggles of "I, Man" through the millenniums of physical, cultural, and spiritual change until he emerges upon the level which we now call civilization.

America: 1355-1364. By HJALMAR R. HOLAND. Duell, Sloan. Pp. 256. \$4.00.

A companion volume to *Westward from Vinland*. A study of the Kensington Stone, of the fourteenth-century church at Newport, identification of mooring stones and camp sites left by the first explorers, the growth of the Mandans from savagery to a Christian agricultural community. A wealth of discovery and interpretation. Illustrations and end maps.

The Roosevelt I Knew. By FRANCES PERKINS. Viking. \$3.75.

For sixteen years Miss Perkins was a loyal associate of the late President. "Bound to him by ties of affection, common purpose, and joint undertaking," she says he was the most complicated of human beings. As a friendly observer she seems candid and honest.

Yes and No Stories: A Book of Georgian Folk Tales. By GEORGE and HELEN PAPASHVILY. Harper. \$2.50.

By the authors of *Anything Can Happen*. These are charming stories written with gaiety and imagination. Attractive illustrations by Simon Lissim.

The Wild Flag. By E. B. WHITE. Houghton. Pp. 188. \$2.00.

Editorials from the *New Yorker* on federal world government and other matters. The world, Mr. White points out, is now afraid of its own shadow and is ready for something even broader than it believes itself capable of achieving.

A Matter of Love. By MACKINLEY HELM. Harper. Pp. 251. \$2.50.

A visiting American has written in a wise, tender, and understanding manner of the people of San Rafael, Mexico. Unique decorations by Federico Cantu.

It's an Old New England Custom. By EDWIN VALENTINE MITCHELL. Vanguard. \$2.75.

Reminiscences of the good old days—of pie for breakfast, haunted houses, churchyards, bundling, and all the customs the true New Englander loved. Quaint illustrations.

Thunder Out of China. By T. H. WHITE and ANNALEE JACOBY. Sloane. \$3.00.

China is on the verge of civil war. On a broad canvas two people well qualified by intimate experience with the Chinese paint a startling and pathetic picture of the "haves" and the "have-nots" and what has been accomplished by the Communists. A personal and readable book. November Book-of-the-Month selection.

The Short Stories of Dostoevsky. Introduction by WILLIAM PHILLIPS. Dial. Pp. 631. \$4.00.

For the first time Dostoevsky's stories appear in one volume.

Folk Art of Rural Pennsylvania. By FRANCES LICHTEN. Scribner. \$10.00.

Interest in folk art and folk tales grows steadily. This comprehensive treatise contains thirty-two pages in color, three hundred and eighty-nine illustrations in black and white.

Selected Poems of Maxwell Bodenheim, 1914-1944. Edited by BERNARD ACKERMAN. Pp. 193. \$3.50.

The first major collection of Bodenheim's poems, chosen from nine volumes written during thirty years. Some poems of social protest, some of joy in beauty, and some of doubtful meaning—all with vivid, fresh phases.

The Correspondence of Bayard Taylor and Paul Hamilton Hayne. Edited with Introduction and Notes by CHARLES DUFFY. Louisiana State University Press. Pp. 11. \$2.00.

Sheds light on the conditions under which writers worked in the post-Civil War period, both North and South.

COLLEGE ENGLISH

Ned Ward of Grub Street. HOWARD WILLIAM TROYER. Harvard University Press. Pp. 290. \$3.50.

The biography of a colorful hack writer of the early eighteenth century, with a vivid picture of the times in which he lived. Ward is really used as the leading figure for "A Study of Sub-literary London in the Eighteenth Century," which is this book's subtitle.

My Country School Diary. By JULIA WEBER. Harper. \$3.00.

Although this story is of a little rural school, it should inspire any reader who is interested in youth. The writer believes in "the kind of education that will make a difference in the living of people." She has been successful in meeting the needs of children and the community.

It's My Turn: A Collection of Dramatic Character Sketches. By CLAY FRANKLIN. French. Pp. 94. \$1.00.

An interesting collection of dramatic character sketches.

OLD FAVORITES ILLUSTRATED

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner. Reynal. \$3.75. Critical essay by Robert Penn Warren.

The Rubaiyat of Omar Kayyam. Grosset. Limited edition, \$10.00. De luxe edition, \$2.95.

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REPRINTS

Citizen Tom Paine. by HOWARD FAST. ("Living Library.") World. \$1.00.

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Native Son. By RICHARD WRIGHT. Grosset. \$1.00.

The Razor's Edge. By W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM. ("Triangle Books.") Grosset. \$0.49.

Stories by Katherine Mansfield. ("Living Library.") World. \$1.00.

Who Wants To Live Forever? By WILLIAM MACLEOD PAINE. Grosset. \$1.00.

The World, the Flesh, and Father Smith. By BRUCE MARSHALL. ("Forum Books.") World. \$1.00.

Hamlet. By SHAKESPEARE. Crofts. Paper, \$0.30.

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Faust, Part I. By GOETHE. Crofts. Paper, \$0.30.

FOR THE TEACHER

Twentieth Century English. Edited by WILLIAM S. KNICKERBOCKER. Philosophical Library, 1946. Pp. 460. \$5.00.

A selection of thirty-six essays about language by persons who are interested in English as a living, changing tongue and who conceive of it as an instrument for intelligence which needs complete mastery. Most of them were written especially for this volume. Four, however, appeared originally in *College English*. All stress the idea that better understanding and use of English is a liberalizing power.

Signs, Language and Behavior. By CHARLES MORRIS. Prentice-Hall, 1946. Pp. 365. \$5.00.

The author states that the aim of this book is to lay the foundation for a comprehensive and fruitful science of signs and to attempt to develop a language in which to talk about signs in terms of behavior. Anyone interested in semantics should read it.

The English Dictionary from Cawdrey to Johnson, 1604-1755. By DE WITT T. STARNES and GERTRUDE E. NOYES. University of North Carolina Press, 1946. Pp. 299. \$3.50.

A historical account of the development of the English dictionary from Robert Cawdrey's *Table Alphabeticall* (1604) up to, but not including, the work of Samuel Johnson. Twenty-one English dictionaries were published during these one hundred and fifty years. A chapter is devoted to each. Included also are an introductory section on the medieval and Renaissance heritage of the English dictionary, appendixes on medieval and Renaissance vocabularies, and on the development of cant lexicography, a bibliography and census of dictionaries in American libraries, extensive notes, and a full index.

The Little Magazine. By FREDERICK J. HOFFMAN, CHARLES ALLEN, and CAROLYN F. ULRICH. Princeton University Press, 1946. Pp. 440. \$3.75.

A history and bibliography of the little magazine and its contribution to the literary and social history

of the twentieth century. Fascinating wealth of detail.

The Art of Play Production. By JOHN DOLMAN, JR.
Rev. ed. Illus. Harper, 1946. Pp. 421. \$3.50.

This well-known textbook for the beginner is now re-written, enlarged, and brought up to date in its concepts and illustrative material. The thirty-two pages of photographs are all new, as are most of the thirty-five line drawings.

FOR THE STUDENT

Assignments in Exposition. By LOUISE E. RORA-BACHER. Harper, 1946. Pp. 374. \$1.80.

For use in college composition courses designed "to develop not writers but men and women who can write." The author is not enthusiastic about the use of books of readings and feels that too many rhetorics are not directed primarily to the needs of the average college student. This book therefore aims to combine a simple, practical rhetoric with brief, clear-cut writing models. The contents are divided into eighteen units. Each unit consists of two sections: a discussion of the type, and illustrative material.

Drama and the Theatre Illustrated by Seven Modern Plays. By A. R. FULTON. Illustrated by RICHARD SMITH. Holt, 1946. Pp. 556. \$1.90.

The plays used are by Pinero, Barrie, O'Neill, Lawson, Rice, Wilder, and Coward. In his introduction to each play Fulton shows how the modern playwright has been able to express his ideas in terms of the theater.

A Milton Handbook. By JAMES HOLLY HANFORD.
4th ed. Crofts, 1946. Pp. 465. \$2.50.

This new edition of the handbook has been made in the light of "the flowery crop of knowledge" which has sprung up since the earlier editions. Professor Hanford states, however, that in his revisions a necessary compromise has been made between the new and the old in Milton scholarship. Present trends of research and interpretation have been indicated, and there is a new appendix on Milton in Italy.

Modern English Readings. Edited by ROGER SHERMAN LOOMIS and DONALD LEMEN CLARK. 5th ed. Rinehart, 1946. Pp. 1062. \$3.00.

A fair amount of addition and subtraction has been done since the last edition of this book of readings appeared, although it still contains biographies, short stories, essays, poems, and plays arranged by forms. The most noticeable change, perhaps, is the omission of a number of early nineteenth-century poets, easily accessible elsewhere, to make room for new poems by twentieth-century poets.

The Literature of Business: Contemporary. Selected and edited by ALTA GWINN SAUNDERS and HERBERT LE SOURD CREEK. 5th ed. Harper, 1946. Pp. 453. \$2.25.

A book of readings for young people trying to learn the art of business communication. The selections are almost all new. Part I, "Business Writing," is for the immediate use of students of business writing. Part II, "The Business Man's World," is concerned with the ethics of business, etc.

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